Poems of Inspiration

GLORIOUS DAY

S. E. KISER

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By
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CONTENTS

	PAGE
Action	65
Afoot Alone	56
All Is Lost But Hope	48
Almost Perfect	125
Alone	10
Always a Chance	85
Appearances	87
Around the Table	86
Art That Is Not Lost, An	128
As You Make It	42
At a Window	112
At Parting	77
Baby's Fault, The	12
Bargain Sale, A	52
Blighting Improvements	74
Blissful Potentate, A	135
Boy at the Desk in the Corner, The	44
Boy Scout, The	50
Brightening the Way	93
Brotherhood	105
Builders, The	66
Certain Victory, The	19
Cheated	114
Clothes and the Man	139
Common Privilege, A	133
Country Preacher, A	20
Daily Round, The	142
Dangerous Character, A	24
December 31	144
Delightful Visitors	136
Don't Be Afraid to Ask	27
Don't Do It	119
Dynamo, The	95

PAGE

Eloquence 131
Eternal Feminine, The 132
Even Now 97
Every Man's Chance 123
Exception, An 107

Fair Price, A 71
Faith 23
Faithful Ones, The 34
Fight Worth Winning, A 106
Fighter, The 14
Fighter's Choice, A 62
Folly-Chaser, The 130
Forsaken 67
For Value Received 71
Forward 6
Friendliness 121

Gladly Paying the Price 76
Glorious Day 3
Glorious Possibilities 40
Glorious To-Morrows 64
Good Luck 137
Good Signs 134
Greatness 117

Health, Wealth, and Happiness 61
His Ship 85
How Short the Way 29

I Can 33
If the Cause Be Just 75
Ill Winds 45
Infallible Sign, An 89
In Good Time 139
It May Be 15
I Will 88

PAGE

January 1 4
Judgment 83
Just Around the Corner 7

Keep Young 72
Knowledge 94

Lark Singing in October, A 91
Littleness 109
Little Prayer, A 21
Little Street, The 100
Little Teacher, The 28
Loser, The 11
Love Cares Not for Names 101
Lucky Days 82

Making It Up With Dan 54
Man's Job, A 60
Marching Onward 30
Master of His Art, A 98
Merry Madness 32
Miraculous 90
My Creed 9

Never-Failing Doctor, A 81
New and Bright 46
News Bearer, The 113
New Wonders and Old 22
Not Without Price 96

Obligation 58

Parting Ways 115
Pathways 51
Peaceful Way, The 43
Plan Worth Trying, A 99
Poor Cynic 53
Profitable Day, A 122

PAGE

Reversion to Type 102
Rich Little Poor Man, The 38
Road to Success, The 95

Sailor Forever, A 124
Scandal 63
Second Childhood 104
See It Through 78
Smiles 92
Sportsman's Game, A 37
Stagnation 141
Stay-at-Home, The 84
Still in the Fight 118
Strength 59

Tainted 79
Taking It Hard 126
Their Absent Boy 140
Thinkin' o' Mother 70
To-Day 138
Tolerance 26
To the Friendless, Greeting 18
Treasured Grievances 129
Tributaries 108

Unsubdued 7
Unwelcome Guest, An 68

Waiting Genius 127
Wealth 13
What Some Men Call Success 47
When Clouds Are Dark 120
When Your Best Is Done 143
Where They Pass 17
While the Game Is On 21
Who Could Say More? 110
Why Be a Rainy Day? 36

PAGE

Why Be Weak? 35
Why Don't You Fight? 80
Will to Try, The 69
Withered Flower, A 16
Wizard, A 8
Work Well Done 111
World's Wonders, The 25
Worth Remembering 116

GLORIOUS DAY

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OVER my head the stars, distant and pale and cold;
Under my feet the world, wrinkled and scarred and old;
Back of me all that was, all the relentless past,
The future waiting beyond, silent, untenanted, vast:
I at the center of all that has been or that is to be—
The world lying under my feet and the stars looking down at me.

Out in the far beyond, waiting for God's good time,
Splendid cities may rise, heroes may be sublime;
The past may measure against the future that is to be
As a fleeting day compares with a storied century;
Prophets unborn may see with a vision that shall be clear,
But the future is dumb, and I, dowered with speech, am here.

I stand at the end of the past, where the future
begins I stand;
Captains may rise again, and conquerors may
command,
But greater than kings unborn or emperors
under earth
Am I, with the chance to test my courage and
prove my worth!
Under my feet the world; over my head the
sky—
Here at the center of things, in the busy present
am I.

JANUARY 1

HERE is another new year beginning,
A year for turning from hopeless ways,
A year for daring to try, for winning
At last, in spite of the long delays;
Here is a year for brave endeavor,
A year for mending our past mistakes,
A year for guarding the truth, however
Alluring the promise that error makes.

Here the future begins; behind us
The past, with all that was bitter, lies;
Shall hate or fear or bigotry blind us
To the good unfolding before our eyes?

Shall we shuffle in fetters that Time has rusted,
Cowering captives, body and soul,
Or march ahead with our thoughts adjusted
To the newer sign on the looming goal?

Here is a year to be undertaking
The high adventures too long delayed,
A year for turning from doubt, and breaking
Through rotten barriers, unafraid!
They who have held us, or tried to hold us,
In mental bondage will warn and sneer,
And the ancient falsehoods, too often told us,
We shall hear again, if we pause to hear.

We stand at the place where the past is ended,
Between to-morrow and yesterday;
Before us all that is new and splendid,
Behind us wreckage, mischance, decay!
Shall we stay in the ruts and be mumbling gravely,
Slaves to dogma and checked by dread,
Or, urged by reason, endeavor bravely
To reach the good that is out ahead?

FORWARD

FORWARD, brothers—all together;
Let the great procession start!
Who would wait for fairer weather?
Forward, strong in faith and heart!
Onward to the world of wonder
That is tempting Enterprise;
Opportunity is yonder
Where the trackless future lies.

Forward, brothers, to the fairer
And the friendlier, better day,
Each to be a worthy sharer
Of the splendors on the way!
Let the Past hold no debenture
To deprive us of our hopes,
Onward to the great adventure,
Out beyond the distant slopes.

Forward, valiant and undaunted,
To the wonders that are spread
Where no dusty halls are haunted
By the hatreds that are dead!
Onward to the fair to-morrows
And the broader brotherhood;
Forward from the needless sorrows
To the newer, greater good!

UNSUBDUED

I HAVE hoped, I have planned, I have striven,
To the will I have added the deed;
The best that was in me I've given,
I have prayed, but the gods would not heed.

I have dared and reached only disaster,
I have battled and broken my lance;
I am bruised by a pitiless master
That the weak and the timid call Chance.

I am old, I am bent, I am cheated
Of all that Youth urged me to win;
But name me not with the defeated,
To-morrow again, I begin.

JUST AROUND THE CORNER

His luck had fled, his hope was dead,
His eyes were dimmed by tears;
"I'm through," he thought; "I've dared and fought,
But vainly through the years."

He rose, at last, to totter past
A corner just ahead,
Where Luck sprang out, with merry shout,
And Hope got out of bed.

A WIZARD

THE little boy whose arms are wound
Around my neck at night
May never learn to be profound
Nor have a giant's might,
But when Temptation calls to me
To leave the narrow track,
For profit or for pleasure, he
Has strength to hold me back.

The little boy who bears my name
Knows little of men's ways,
And he may never win wide fame
Nor claim the public's praise,
But when the world has been unkind,
And I go home in doubt,
He charms the poison from my mind,
And puts my cares to rout.

The little boy whose laughter rings
When I go home at night
May not accomplish splendid things,
His talents may be slight;
No doctrine that he shall expound
May ever sway a throng,
But he can put his arms around
My neck and make me strong.

MY CREED

THIS is my creed: To do some good,
To bear my ills without complaining,
To press on as a brave man should
For honors that are worth the gaining;
To seek no profits where I may,
By winning them, bring grief to others;
To do some service day by day
In helping on my toiling brothers.

This is my creed: To close my eyes
To little faults of those around me;
To strive to be when each day dies
Some better than the morning found me;
To ask for no unearned applause,
To cross no river until I reach it;
To see the merit of the cause
Before I follow those who preach it.

This is my creed: To try to shun
The sloughs in which the foolish wallow;
To lead where I may be the one
Whom weaker men should choose to follow.
To keep my standards always high,
To find my task and always do it;
This is my creed—I wish that I
Could learn to shape my actions to it.

ALONE

"It's mighty still around the place
  Since mother went away;
The parrot looks me in the face
  Without a word to say;
The clock's the only thing that's kept
  On goin' as before—
It makes the only noise, except
  The squeakin' of the floor.

"Her knittin's as she left it there
  Upon the handy shelf;
The broom stands in the corner where
  She set it back herself;
Her apron's hangin' on the hook
  Beside the kitchen sink;
I see things everywhere I look
  That make me think—and think.

"Her Bible's open where she read
  The night before she went;
The pillow where she laid her head
  Still plainly shows the dent;
It's all just as it was the day
  She left me to reflect,
Except the cat has went away—
  Got lonesome, I expect.

"I never realized before
How long the nights could be;
The quietness gets more and more
Oppressive, seems to me;
But won't she smash it when she gives
Me all the news she'll bring
Pertainin' to our relatives
She's busy visiting!"

THE LOSER

WHY do you shout for the man who has won?
Why are you one of the many who cheer him?
Why do you praise him for what he has done,
Why are you proud of the chance to be near him?
Why do you follow him down through the street,
Forgetting the man who has suffered defeat?

Why are you anxious to let it appear
That the victor possesses your keen admiration,
When the man who is whipped may be needing your cheer,
May long for one word of sincere commendation?
The man who has won may be agile and strong,
But that is no proof that the loser was wrong.

THE BABY'S FAULT

HALF-HIDDEN where she might not see,
He watched her pass, still young and sweet;
She wheeled a baby tenderly
Along the pleasant, shaded street.
How long ago it seemed that they
Had strolled beneath the branches there;
It might have been but yesterday—
She'd kept so graceful and so fair.

He wondered, seeing her pass by,
If memory ever made her sad;
What happy fortune could supply
Such gladness as they might have had?
He thought, with profitless regret,
How on a certain Summer day,
Her long, dark lashes had been wet
When sadly he had turned away.

The years had seemed so very long
Through which he strove to prove his worth;
Her promises had kept him strong,
But now his hopes were dashed to earth.
The wistful look he hoped to see
Did not appear upon her face,
As stealthily he gazed while she
Had passed his leafy hiding-place.

He left his nook, at last, to go
  Alone through all the years, to dream
Of gladness he could never know
  And pledges they could not redeem.
She, keeping her fond hopes concealed,
  And dreaming dreams that still were sweet,
Was waiting for him as she wheeled
  Her sister's baby down the street.

WEALTH

THERE is no wide estate
  In which I claim a share;
But no man may deny
The ownership that I
  Have in each day that's fair.

My income is not great,
  I claim few luxuries,
But no man may destroy
The profit I enjoy
  From every gentle breeze.

No servants guard my gate,
  But no man has the right
To think that he may strip
Me of my ownership
  In every dawn that's bright.

THE FIGHTER

I FIGHT a battle every day
  Against discouragement and fear;
Some foe stands always in my way,
  The path ahead is never clear!
I must forever be on guard
  Against the doubts that skulk along;
I get ahead by fighting hard,
  But fighting keeps my spirit strong.

I hear the croakings of Despair,
  The dark predictions of the weak;
I find myself pursued by Care,
  No matter what the end I seek;
My victories are small and few,
  It matters not how hard I strive;
Each day the fight begins anew,
  But fighting keeps my hopes alive.

My dreams are spoiled by circumstance,
  My plans are wrecked by Fate or Luck;
Some hour, perhaps, will bring my chance,
  But that great hour has never struck;
My progress has been slow and hard,
  I've had to climb and crawl and swim,
Fighting for every stubborn yard,
  But I have kept in fighting trim.

I have to fight my doubts away,
And be on guard against my fears;
The feeble croaking of Dismay
Has been familiar through the years;
My dearest plans keep going wrong,
Events combine to thwart my will,
But fighting keeps my spirit strong,
And I am undefeated still!

IT MAY BE

It may be that you cannot stay
To lend a friendly hand to him
Who stumbles on the slippery way,
Pressed by conditions hard and grim;
It may be that you dare not heed
His call for help, because you lack
The strength to lift him, but you need
Not push him back.

It may be that he has not won
The right to hope for your regard;
He may in folly have begun
The course that he has found so hard;
It may be that his fingers bleed,
That Fortune turns a bitter frown
Upon his efforts, but you need
Not kick him down.

A WITHERED FLOWER

Reclining in an easy chair,
  She gazes dreamily away;
Her hands are wrinkled now that were
  Unsplotched and smooth and soft one day.
Her hair, which once in ringlets hung,
  Makes one wee coil, as white as snow;
Once she was lively, too, and young,
  But that was very long ago.

Her lips are thin and tightly drawn,
  Perhaps they once were full and red;
The lustre from her eyes is gone,
  And now and then she nods her head,
Yet once, perhaps, it gave her joy
  To listen, when the lights were low,
To eager pleading by some boy
  Whose hopes were dampened long ago.

She rises slowly, bent and small,
  And moves about as if she feared,
Alas, to trust her feet, and all
  Her former grace has disappeared;
But once perhaps she skipped along
  A flowery way, her cheeks aglow;
For her some unknown poet's song
  May have been written, long ago.

Perhaps in dreams sometimes she still
Has all her youthful grace and charms,
And decks herself, as maidens will,
With bracelets on her rounded arms;
Perhaps in merry dreams she skips
Through paths where blossoms used to blow,
And listens to fond words from lips
That fell to dust long, long ago.

WHERE THEY PASS

A GENTLE breeze passed this way yesterday,
The leaves were stirred, the slender boughs were bent;
To-day no trace remains to show the way
The wind that blew so gently came or went.

Long, long ago a wild storm thundered through
Where still its pathway plainly may be seen;
Behold the wreckage that is left to strew
Broad valleys, once attractive and serene.

Men are as breezes and as storms that blow;
A million pass and sink to gentle sleep,
Their pathways hidden soon; where great ones go
The wreckage lies in many a tangled heap.

TO THE FRIENDLESS, GREETING

THE desert isles are not the only
Dull spots where exiles learn to sigh;
The roaring city may be lonely,
With revelry that rises high.
Napoleon, gazing at the sea,
Denied the sight of friendly faces,
Was not more lonesome than is he
Who walks unknown in crowded places.

Where many lights are glowing brightly
And Pleasure calls the passing throng,
Men who are weary wander nightly,
Their hopes deferred, their plans gone wrong;
No friendly merriment is theirs,
Their names are never shouted gladly;
They find their ways up creaking stairs,
To sit alone and ponder sadly.

At noonday in the crowded city
Sad women smile to check their tears;
They turn in fear from looks of pity,
No praise is whispered in their ears;
For them no mirth at dazzling shows,
No swiftly passing hours of pleasure,
No sweet dreams at the long day's close,
No happy memories to treasure.

To all the exiles who are faring,
With lack of friends, in lonely ways
I offer greeting, and am daring
To wish them future happy days—
Fair days, when, cheered by friendly smiles
And glimpses of familiar faces,
They may forget that desert isles
Are not the only lonely places.

THE CERTAIN VICTORY

Why should I sit in doubt or fear? If I
Awake some morning from that dreaded sleep
To find myself new-born and lifted high,
Then I will turn, and, looking o'er the deep
That lies beneath me, shout for joy and throw
A last good-by at Pain and Fear, below.

But what if, at the last, no light shall break—
If this is all—if when I fall asleep
No angel's voice shall sweetly cry, "Awake,"
And there shall be but Nothing, dark and deep—
Oh, well, I shall not care if it be so,
I'll triumph still, for I shall never know.

A COUNTRY PREACHER

His clothes are poor and his pay is small;
He will never be cheered by a higher call;
He never has listened to rich men's praise,
For he never has wandered from humble ways;
His beard is gray and his form is bent,
Where few things happen his years are spent.

But he kneels with those who have need of cheer,
Imparting hope and dispelling fear;
He has married, baptized, said funeral prayers,
He has ended quarrels and banished cares;
He is keeping secrets locked in his breast,
And they'll go with him to his last long rest.

People who sit where the lights are dim
Have learned the faith that they have from him;
He has knelt with those who had weakly strayed,
And made them hopeful and unafraid;
He has taught the wronged that there still is good;
He has filled his mission as best he could.

His pulpit is graced by no splendid gear,
He has spent his life in a humble sphere;

His pay is poor; he has missed renown;
His clothes are frayed and his heels run down;
The tears of sinners have stained his hands,
But maybe a wise God understands.

A LITTLE PRAYER

THAT I may not in blindness grope,
  But that I may with vision clear
Know when to speak a word of hope
  Or add a little wholesome cheer.

That tempered winds may softly blow
  Where little children, thinly clad,
Sit dreaming, when the flame is low,
  Of comforts they have never had.

That through the year which lies ahead
  No heart shall ache, no cheek be wet,
For any word that I have said
  Or profit I have tried to get.

WHILE THE GAME IS ON

WHETHER wealth or whether fame
  Is the end for which we strive,
It's the glory of the game
  As we struggle to arrive
  That keeps most of us alive.

NEW WONDERS AND OLD

They are trying to bridge the gulfs that lie
Between this world and the great unknown;
They hear the voices of those who try
To speak from some ethereal zone,
And men who are wise cast doubt away,
And are sure, at last, that they understand;
They have learned a faith that is new, they say,
From those who have gone to the Spirit Land;
But the words that strengthen me with good cheer
Are spoken by one who still is here.

They are getting signals from spheres that swing
Beyond the sun, through the deeps of space,
And they try to decipher the words they bring,
Perhaps from a high and superior race.
The men of science in wonder gaze
At planets that never before were seen;
Strange currents come from the starry ways,
And the world is wondering what they mean;
But I, unnumbered among the wise,
Still search for faith in two sparkling eyes.

Old errors die and new truths are learned,
Deep mysteries are becoming clear;

Outworn conventions are overturned,
Men smile at things that they used to fear.
Daily new wonders are brought to birth,
Others lie just beyond men's reach;
But I, being simple and near the earth,
Find a greater wonder than spirit speech
In the tooth a baby is cutting to-day
And the love that two trusting eyes display.

FAITH

Faith is not merely praying
Upon your knees at night;
Faith is not merely straying
Through darkness to the light.

Faith is not merely waiting
For glory that may be,
Faith is not merely hating
The sinful ecstasy.

Faith is the brave endeavor,
The splendid enterprise,
The strength to serve, whatever
Conditions may arise.

A DANGEROUS CHARACTER

A FOOLISH man lives down the street,
And he refuses to be sad;
He claims that life's a daily treat,
A lucky chance for being glad;
The simplest things that serve to please
He praises and considers good,
But certain people fear that he's
A menace to the neighborhood.

He thinks that loveliness is more
Important than a pious look;
I have not ever heard him roar
Quotations from the Holy Book;
He joins the children at their games,
And dares to think without restraint;
Mere dread of God, he boldly claims,
Has never made a single saint.

Love, he insists, is greater, far,
Than any law that men can frame,
And slaughter, though they call it war,
He scoffs at as a madmen's game.
He dares to think that God may not
Consider pious humbug good,
And certain people think they ought
To drive him from the neighborhood.

THE WORLD'S WONDERS

GREATER things have come to pass
Than the crowning of a king;
There's the growing blade of grass,
Or the willow's glow in Spring.
More entrancing things are heard
Than the songs that thrill or sway;
There's the first lisped little word
That a baby learns to say.

Greater than majestic ships
That defy the ocean's rage
Is the prayer upon the lips
Of devout, serene old age.
More important than the right
Of the chieftain to decide
Is the burial of spite,
Or the mastery of pride.

Greater things are being done
Than the financiers have planned;
Daily wind and rain and sun
Spread their profit o'er the land.
More inspiring than the cheers
When the leader passes by
Is the blossom that appears
Where the bough was bare and dry.

TOLERANCE

If you can go to heaven your way,
I know of no good reason why
I ought to curse you, or display
Contempt when you are passing by;
I have no wish to see you barred
From future everlasting joy,
Although you seem to find it hard
To use the faith that I employ.

As long as you are not inclined
To have me damned and scourged and burned
I'll try to have an open mind
Where our two creeds may be concerned;
No pious hate nor holy wrath
Shall make me wish to bruise your soul
Or put obstructions in the path
By which you hope to reach your goal.

If, kneeling at your mother's knee,
You learned a faith that keeps you strong,
No effort shall be made by me
To prove that your belief is wrong;
I shall not question nor deny
The saving grace that fills your thought,
Though you may hold beliefs that I
Have never had, and never sought.

Hold fast the faith that you possess,
If you can find sweet hope therein,
And freedom from the bitterness
That plunges bigots into sin;
If your way leads to heaven, proceed,
Nor any of your hopes resign;
I have no doubt that there, indeed,
Are many other ways than mine.

DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK

"I LIKE tall men," she said, and he
Was five feet, five—no more;
"I do not like bald men," said she;
He scratched the wig he wore.

"I like men who have wit," she said;
He had no wit at all;
"My husband's nose must not be red";
His nose was red and small.

"Oh, will you be my wife?" said he,
With eager earnestness;
She listened while he made his plea,
And gladly answered: "Yes."

THE LITTLE TEACHER

A LITTLE boy who thinks that I
  Am very wise and good and great,
Who never asks if I would lie
  Or let myself be urged by hate,
Comes trustingly, at night, to me
  And does not care or try to guess
Why all my fondest hopes should be
  Built up around his happiness.

Before he came to make me glad
  I fear I did not always care
If little boys sometimes were sad
  Because their treatment was unfair;
But tearful little faces now
  Keep haunting me through all the day,
And make me wish I might, somehow,
  Charm every childish ill away.

I GO to stand beside his bed
  When angry storms begin to break,
When thunder crashes overhead
  And all the earth's foundations shake;
And in the comfort he enjoys
  I find a reason, strong and sure,
To hope all other little boys
  May sleep in peace, their faith secure.

Since I possess his love, his trust,
I wonder how men ever dare,
By being selfish and unjust,
To cause the hardships children bear;
I cannot guess why any man
In whom a child's fond hopes repose
Can fail to shape his every plan
To lessen other children's woes.

HOW SHORT THE WAY

Ah, still to you I am sublime,
With boundless trust you clutch my hand,
But you will lose your faith some time,
Some morning you will understand.

With all your cares you come to me,
'Tis I that right your childish wrongs;
But some day even you shall see
How little power to me belongs.

Some day with pity you will turn,
Aware that I am frail, indeed;
How brief the years ere you shall learn,
How short the way where I may lead!

MARCHING ONWARD

We who claim sufficient courage to be free in
soul and mind,
We who leave old superstitions and old hind-
rances behind,
Have become a mighty army that gains wisdom
as it grows,
And across our stainless banner the sublime
word "Progress" glows.
We are casting out false leaders who have put
our faith to shame;
We have ceased to heed their warnings and no
longer fear their blame.

We are marching out of darkness to the light
that shines ahead;
We can see the peaks beyond us, where the
rays in splendor spread;
We are climbing from the valleys where the
sombre shadows fall,
Where the selfish still are scheming, and the
slaves of custom crawl.
We are marching up to honor, gaining wisdom
as we go,
Leaving ancient prejudices in the fetid gloom
below.

We are soldiers who have battled for the right
to think and see,

And our sacred oath is, "Service, where our
spirits may be free!"
We have passed the gaping caverns where the
snarling broods of greed
Gnaw the lean flesh of their victims, and our
ban is on their breed.
"Progress" glows upon the banner that above
our column flies,
And the glow of honor shimmers where the
distant ranges rise.

We have risen from the bondage of fantastic
class and caste
And are throwing off the burdens that have bent
us in the past;
We are leaving them to wallow in the darkness
and the slime
Who get ready-made opinions and are merely
serving Time.
We are marching onward boldly from the
swamps where doubt is bred
To the promise that is glowing on the heights
that loom ahead.

MERRY MADNESS

Love has turned his head completely,
He has lost his former poise;
Just because a girl smiles sweetly
He is finding strange, new joys;
Love has sent his fancies flying
Into realms where castles loom;
There is gladness in his sighing,
And her vision haunts his room.

Men who hold to high ambitions
And have left romance behind,
Look upon him with suspicions,
Thinking love has wrecked his mind;
He is making blunders daily
Where he seldom erred before,
And he scribbles verses gayly
That are trash and nothing more.

He would risk his life to please her,
And be glad to have the chance;
Pleasure fills him when he sees her,
There is glory in her glance;
He is sure that she has never
Had an equal anywhere,
And he thinks no man has ever
Cared as he has learned to care.

He has lately lost his senses,
And is laughed at by the wise;
She may merely make pretenses
When she lets him hear her sighs,
But no doubt disturbs his gladness,
He declines to hear advice,
And the joy that's in his madness
Would be cheap at any price.

I CAN

It may not be my lot to win
The crowd's applause, the world's regard;
But I can turn my back to sin,
And keep my worthiness unmarred.

I may not have the gifts to gain
High favor or to win renown;
But I can manfully refrain
From ever pulling others down.

I may not win the splendid race
That calls for strength and speed and nerve;
But I can keep from being base,
However humbly I must serve.

THE FAITHFUL ONES

When all goes well, when Fortune beams
  Upon you with her fairest smile,
When Luck befriends you and it seems
  That all your efforts are worth while;
When smirking flatterers proceed
  To put your oldest doubts to flight,
You may forget that you have need
  Of them who wait for you at night.

But when your efforts fail, when they
  Whom you have thought your friends have
    turned,
Because ill luck has come your way,
  And sought their pleasures, unconcerned—
When all your plans have gone amiss
  And all your hopes have taken flight,
Then you have need of her fond kiss
  Who waits to welcome you at night.

When Fate has been inclined to cheat
  You of rewards you hoped to claim,
When, with the bruises of defeat
  And bending under bitter blame,
You turn at night to them who still
  Are faithful, patient, loving, just,
You need the Little Ones to fill
  Your heart with hope, your soul with trust.

The sky so clear to-day and blue,
May cease to-morrow to be clear;
The friends whom you have thought so true
May shun you when you need their cheer,
But they who nightly give you kind,
Glad greetings faithfully will wait:
Be true to them, for you will find
That you will need them, soon or late.

WHY BE WEAK?

Hopelessness is weakness, sadness a disease;
Why sit down and grumble where the gloom is thick?
Why not labor bravely for rewards that please—
Why be sick?

Bitterness is folly, hate is but a sore;
Why persist in prodding to increase the pain?
Why keep old wounds open that would soon heal o'er—
Where's the gain?

Cheerfulness is vigor, hopeful men are strong;
Good is always somewhere, nor is far to seek;
Only foolish weaklings think that all is wrong—
Why be weak?

WHY BE A RAINY DAY?

Why try to make us think that all is wrong
  And that the world is drifting to its doom?
Why interrupt a singer's hopeful song
  Or ever fill an hour with needless gloom?
Why keep a sad expression on your face
  Or try to lure another's cheer away?
Why help to make the world a dreary place—
    Why be a rainy day?

Why mumble that mankind is growing worse?
  Why grumble over fancied aches and ills?
Why tell us God is thundering His curse
  When storms come roaring down across the hills?
Why ever try to cause us to forget
  That blossoms are to gladden many a May?
Why harp on old mistakes that we regret?
    Why be a rainy day?

Why not assist the sun to penetrate
  The clouds that may be hanging overhead?
Why close your heart to love or cling to hate?
  Why seek to fill a soul with needless dread?
Why not acknowledge that men's faults grow less,
  And learn that faith and cheer and kindness pay?
Why wear the dismal mask of hopelessness?
    Why be a rainy day?

A SPORTSMAN'S GAME

I have hoped, and I have dared
To cross bridges that were frail;
Fighting hunger, I have shared
Crusts when they were scarce and stale.
If my merit is denied,
Or unnoticed by the crowd,
Fate has, now and then, supplied
Moments when my heart was proud.

I have loved and lost, and learned
Gladly how to love again;
All that I possess I've earned,
With no odds from other men.
People may not care to look
For the marks that I have made,
But I've filled my little nook,
And played fairly when I played.

I have turned, sometimes, to see
From my rival's point of view;
Others have outdistanced me,
But I've given them their due!
If no thing that I have done
Shall entitle me to fame,
I have had a lot of fun,
And I've played a sportsman's game.

THE RICH LITTLE POOR MAN

I KNOW a man who's very great, though Fame
has passed him by;
He rules no city and no state, he hasn't risen
high;
There are no cheers when he appears; he has
to punch a clock,
And probably he often hears the grim collec-
tor's knock;
But if his purse is thin and small, his look is
always glad,
And he is wealthy, after all—six children call
him dad.

He labors in a little niche where sunbeams
rarely play,
And often dreams of being rich and drawing
princely pay;
Few people think it worth their while to greet
him or to ask
What reason he may have to smile while
bending to his task;
But if his worth is little known, he clings to
hopeful cheer,
Expecting fortune to be blown his way some
lucky year.

The Summer brings him no release from Duty's
harsh demands;

He seeks no Winter sport or peace in sunny
Southern lands;
But often at his desk in May he strolls in
fancy where
Slim branches, blossom-laden, sway, and
breathes the fragrance there;
And when December winds are keen he sees
through misty panes
Far hillside that are turning green, and
peaceful, grassy lanes.

While others hurry, cheered by few rewards
and little praise,
He dreams of streams that tinkle through
secluded woodland ways,
And in his corner, cramped and dark, where
figures dance in rows,
He hears the robin and the lark, forgetting
debts he owes,
Or takes imaginary trips across untroubled
seas
Upon imaginary ships to island boweries.

When he has earned his daily pay and from
his nook descends
The children greet him on his way, for they
are all his friends,
And those who proudly call him dad watch
when the time is near

To give him noisy greeting, glad to share his simple cheer!
The little poor man who is rich need not be troubled by
Their sneers who miss the ways in which his daily pleasures lie.

GLORIOUS POSSIBILITIES

THE dust of many ages is deep where Helen lies;
Where Hector was the captain no frowning turrets rise,
But on some swaying petal where fragrant zephyrs blow
There may be gleaming dewdrops that centuries ago
Were tears in Helen's eyes.

No king is making merry in Babylon to-day;
No princes journey thither in glittering array;
The streets that once were crowded are buried out of sight,
And where the halls were splendid, gay spirits of the night,
In silence, still may stray.

Within the great arena the light from Luna falls;

No Cæsar's purple banners are stretched upon
the walls;
But in the ghostly hours, when Rome has
gone to sleep,
Some gladiator's spirit may have a tryst to
keep
With a daughter of the Gauls.

The Arno still is flowing and Florence still is
fair,
And lovers cross the bridges and lightly laugh
at care,
But when the April twilight fades out, and
all is dark,
Two whispers that are Dante and Beatrice
may park
Among the shadows there.

Though you and she may never clasp hands
again or tell
Sweet secrets to each other, some breeze from
hill or dell
May blow, in future eons, as blossom scents
are blown,
The soft dust of her fingers to mingle with
your own,
And, oh, won't that be swell!

AS YOU MAKE IT

To the preacher, life's a sermon,
To the joker, it's a jest,
To the miser, life is money,
To the loafer, life is rest.

To the lawyer, life's a trial,
To the poet, life's a song,
To the doctor, life's a patient,
That needs treatment right along.

To the soldier, life's a battle,
To the teacher, life's a school,
Life's "a good thing" to the grafter,
It's a failure to the fool.

To the man upon the engine,
Life's a long and heavy grade;
It's a gamble to the gambler;
To the merchant, life's a trade.

Life is but a long vacation,
To the man who loves his work;
Life's an everlasting effort
To shun duty, to the shirk.

Life is useful or unuseful,
Life is false or life is true;
Life is what we try to make it;
What has life become to you?

THE PEACEFUL WAY

THEIR children left them long ago,
As people's children will,
And now, with careful steps and slow,
They journey down the hill.
He swings no jaunty stick, but leans
Upon a useful cane,
And, having turned from cares that bound
Them once so firmly, they have found
Another Lovers' Lane.

Her hand is laid upon his arm,
And in her heart is pride;
He seems to think she has the charm
One looks for in a bride.
With knightly gallantry he still
Assists her up the stairs,
And still sometimes he gives her praise,
And in a hundred little ways
Assures her that he cares.

There may have been a time when he
Was not so much concerned,
But all the love he had when she
Was youthful has returned.
They've journeyed far through good and ill,
But now o'er peaceful miles,
And pausing when they please to rest,
They wander downward through the west
To life's glad Afterwhiles.

THE BOY AT THE DESK IN THE CORNER

You envy men whose pay is high,
The men whose hair is turning gray;
You see them passing, and you sigh
Because you work for little pay.
They have so much to make them proud,
But are they always glad, in truth?
What would they give to be endowed
Again with youth?

You envy him who rides along
Where people crowd to see his face;
You hear the cheering of the throng,
And wish that you were in his place.
By eager thousands he is hailed
Where flags and bunting have been strung,
But many men have tried and failed
Since he was young.

You work unnoticed in your nook
For meager pay and little praise,
And envy other men who look
Well paid and wise in worldly ways.
You read, perhaps, how they are sought
To mend or manage large affairs,
But it is long since they forgot
Youth's little cares.

While you must toil they travel far,
  Their deals are big, their profits quick;
But many lines have come to mar
  Their faces, and their waists are thick!
You never may be one of them
  At whom the world's bouquets are flung;
But youth still wears a diadem,
  And you are young.

ILL WINDS

THE wildest wind that ever blew
  Became a gentle breeze, at last;
The childhood ills we struggle through
  Return no more when they are past.

The hardest tasks to which we turn
  Are easy after they are done;
Through lessons that are hard to learn
  The knowledge we most need is won.

The weak, when trouble finds them, yield
  And fretfully accept defeat;
The strong fight on, their fears concealed,
  Until their triumphs are complete.

NEW AND BRIGHT

"This old world!" Is it old to you,
Its Springtime gone, its zenith passed?
See where its streams are winding through
The hills in mighty ranges massed;
The rivers all are young; they take
The easy courses, as they please,
Too youthful to begin to make
Direct and short cuts to the seas.

Who tells us that the world is old,
Worn out and gray and on the wane,
Its purpose served, its story told,
With little left to lose or gain?
Their sight is dim who think it so,
They flush no more with youthful thrills;
The world is young, the warming glow
Of morning is upon its hills.

The best is yet to be; the trees
Have future lusciousness to yield;
Within the caverns of the seas
The choicest treasures are concealed;
Earth, air and sun wait still to cheer
Us with their comforting supplies;
Where neither wharves nor walls appear
The fairest cities are to rise.

"This old world!" Is it old to you,
Its beauty gone, its duty done?

The world is glorious and new,
Its course but recently begun!
The past has merely been a day,
Beyond us are the countless years
In which to find the joyous way
From needless ills and foolish fears.

WHAT SOME MEN CALL SUCCESS

DENY yourself the pleasures youth would claim;
Count every moment precious; never rest;
Consider how the rich have played the game,
Be always up and doing, at your best.

Let eagerness for wealth become the goad
That drives you daily to new enterprise;
Don't pause to gather flowers beside the road;
Be quick to find the spot where profit lies.

Be selfish if you must; be friendless, cold;
Let nothing keep you from the goal you seek;
Where boldness offers dividends be bold,
Beware of foolish pity for the weak.

Become a driving power, a mighty force,
Be firm, be strong, be grim, be pitiless;
You'll miss the finer things of life, of course,
But you may win what some men call success.

ALL IS LOST BUT HOPE

We have sent our son to college, choking down
our doubts and fears;
He must have his chance with others when his
glad youth disappears;
He must learn to lead, to dazzle, in the later
stress and strife,
But they'll haze him to a frazzle, maybe
maiming him for life.

They will goad him into taking chances that
he ought to shun;
He must learn the trick of breaking up the
furniture for fun;
He will be a chronic debtor to each tradesman
in the town;
Now and then we'll get a letter, when they
turn him coldly down.

He will learn to skimp his classes—anything
to fool the "prof"—
And, with other youthful asses, throw
restraining habits off;
He will have to think of "prexy" as a fossil
and a pest,
But he's ours—our own—God bless him! and
we're hoping for the best.

He will learn to think it funny and be free
from all concern
When he gambles with the money that I labor
hard to earn;
He will wish to be elected to his class club and
a frat,
And, of course, I'll be expected to proceed to
dig for that.

He will spend few moments caring how his
scholarship may stand,
But will be among the daring when there's
deviltry on hand;
Scorning books and seeking only girls and
dances and high jinks,
He will pity the poor, lonely sap who studies
hard and thinks.

He'll forget his mother's teaching, as I care-
lessly forgot,
And my confidential preaching he'll consider
tommyrot;
We have lost our sweet contentment—here's
a telegraphed request
For another extra hundred—but we're hoping
for the best.

THE BOY SCOUT

I WATCH you and I wonder, as I see you go
your way,
What helpful thought is sprouting in your
mind;
Has the good turn on your programme been
disposed of for to-day,
Are you thinking of the need of being kind?
As you hurry on, my boy,
Let me wish you future joy
And the strength to do the tasks that you
shall find.

You are lucky, little soldier, to have Duty for
your guide,
And lucky to be glad in doing right;
In the days that are to follow you'll be looking
back with pride
And remembering with comforting delight;
In the purpose that you serve
You gain steadiness of nerve,
And you're learning how to fight a manly
fight.

Others, passing, may be thoughtless, may not
guess the good you do,
But go your way, undaunted, little scout,
Seeking joy in being helpful and in learning
kindness, too,

And there's profit in the truths you're finding
out;
You are learning how to dare
To be firm and quick and fair,
How to act instead of lingering in doubt.

The hike on which you've started will be wearisome and long,
Out ahead are many dangers to be met,
But you're learning to have courage, to be sensible and strong,
And you're having fun you never will forget;
By the good turns you have done,
If we count them, one by one,
We shall find that you have put us deep in debt.

PATHWAYS

A STAR went shooting down the sky,
And left a streak of light
That glowed a moment, showing where
The meteor had traveled ere
It passed from sight.

Across God's wide eternity
The little paths that mark
Where conquerors passed are like the light
That briefly shows the meteor's flight
Down through the dark.

A BARGAIN SALE

I'm offering for sale to-day
A lot of things I'll need no more;
Come, please, and take them all away,
I've piled them up outside my door.
I'll make the prices low enough,
And trust you, if it's trust you need;
Here I have listed all my stuff,
Make your selection as you read:

A lot of prejudices which
Have ceased to be of use to me;
A stock of envy of the rich,
Some slightly shopworn jealousy;
A large supply of gloom that I
Must not permit to clog my shelves;
I offer bargains—who will buy?
Name prices that will suit yourselves.

A lot of wishes I've outgrown,
A stock of silly old beliefs;
Some pride I once was proud to own,
A bulky line of dreads and griefs;
An old assortment of ill will,
A job lot of bad faith and doubt,
Harsh words that have their poison still;
Choose as you please—I'm closing out.

I need more room for kindliness,
For hope and courage and good cheer.
Take all the hatred I possess,
The superstitions and the fear;
A large supply of frailties I
Shall have no use for from to-day;
I offer bargains; who will buy?
The rubbish must be cleared away!

POOR CYNIC

To the cynic the world is all cynical,
No effort is worthy or fair;
He looks at the man on the pinnacle
And is sure that he should not be there.

To the altruist all things are beautiful,
He is glad if his brothers attain;
Believing that they have been dutiful,
He shares in the pleasures they gain.

Poor cynic, why will you be caviling?
Why greet each new day with a sneer?
Fall in with the ones who are traveling
Through a world they make bright with good cheer.

MAKING IT UP WITH DAN

"I USED to hate Dan Higginson, and when I hate a man
No harder hatin' can be done; I hate for all I can!
He done me wrong in many ways—began 'way back in school—
But hatin' hardly ever pays; I guess I've been a fool.
I used to hate him, and I learned to hate his fam'ly, too;
But now, as far as I'm concerned, the hatin's off—I'm through!

"It started when we had our fight; both won it, more or less;
I'd all I wanted when we quit, and so did he, I guess.
If one of us had licked we might have shook hands and forgot,
But as it was, we clung to spite that cost us each a lot;
He never let a chance go by to harm me where he could,
And I'll acknowledge here that I done much I never should.

"It made me blue when he had luck; I've spoiled a lot of days

In hopin' that he might get stuck head-first in
evil ways.
I used to wish he'd break his neck or drown
himself in drink;
If he'd got smashed up in a wreck I'd laughed
out loud, I think.
The time he ran for town trustee I couldn't
rest or sleep;
I guess you probably can see I hated him a heap.

"Well, when my little boy took sick, about six
months ago,
The gloom was gettin' purty thick; the doctors
didn't know;
They said he might pull through, and yet we
knew they thought he'd die,
And one day on the street we met, Dan
Higginson and I;
He kind of stopped, and I stopped, too—just
casual, understand—
And then the first thing that I knew he'd
gripped me by the hand.

"He spoke about his little ones, the difference
they make,
And asked my pardon, sayin' he had made a
fool's mistake,
And I could see he meant it, too—his eyes were
full of tears—

And now the little boy's come through and
ended all our fears;
And, Lord, it's fine to sit with Dan and smoke
and joke and josh—
The decentest and manliest man I ever knew,
by gosh!"

AFOOT ALONE

I walk to my work when the weather is fair,
For I can't spare the price that they ask for a
car,
And also I find that in taking the air
As I take it, afoot, is a cure for one's care,
And causes one's fancies to wander afar.
So I walk to my work, having nothing to pay,
And am cheered by the wonders I see on the
way.

This morning my barber, a pale little man,
Swished hastily past me; he drives a sedan;
On the boulevard yesterday, down by the river,
I was passed by our scrub lady, driving a
flivver;
The plumber, the druggist and grocery clerk
Drive chummies or roadsters while going to
work.

The down is still soft on our office boy's cheek.
But he purchased a car—at a bargain—last
week;
And I've just heard the junior bookkeeper
inquire
Where the janitor was when he blew out his
tire;
Our typist appears to be troubled alas!
Because of the price they are charging for gas.

The men who sell turnips and milk and cigars
And neckties and sausage all have their own
cars;
The cobbler who fixed the old shoes I am
wearing
Rides forth in his car when he wishes an airing;
When the girl at the switchboard is peevish,
I know
That a blowout or puncture is making her so.

I walk to my work when the mornings are fine,
For I can't pay the price to be riding in style;
The cars hurry past, a continuous line,
But often fair fancies and pleasing are mine,
Such fancies as shorten the merriest mile;
So I walk to the work that's to gladden my day,
And am cheered by the things that I see on the
way,

OBLIGATION

I MAY not have the strength to set
My will against the tyrant's arm,
Or cause him sullenly to let
His prey escape the threatened harm;
But if the bully does not choose
To suffer me to shield the weak,
I tenderly can bathe the bruise
That blackens on the martyr's cheek.

I cannot hope to gladden all
To whom each day brings only dread;
I cannot answer every call
From those whose dearest hopes are dead;
But I, within the little sphere
In which my daily tasks are laid,
Can speak the faith and lend the cheer
That make the doubter unafraid.

I am not numbered with the few
Whose fame extends through every zone;
My place is with the millions who
Pursue a daily course, unknown;
But, even so, I have no right
To shun the wrongs I should assail;
I, too, must help with all my might,
And I am guilty if I fail.

STRENGTH

I WOULD be strong, but not as giants are,
To rend the lion's jaw, to heave the rock,
To break the sapling, bend the iron bar
Or hold outstretched the heavy granite block.
Such strength a grinning idiot may possess,
Or lie within the muscles of an ape,
To be abused, to add new ugliness
To ugly Fear's distorted, loathsome shape.

I would be strong, but I have no desire
For strength such as a tyrant would display
In seeking to cause others to admire,
Or, through his wish, to have unbridled sway.
Such strength may come through accidents of birth
Or be the poor result of circumstance,
To be destroyed or robbed of all its worth
By some unlucky word or evil chance.

I would be strong in heart and strong in trust,
I would have strength, when all is dark, to strive,
To thrust away temptation, to be just,
To face disaster, keeping hope alive!
I would have strength to stand out for the right,
Though all my friends turned blindly to the wrong,
To be undaunted in a losing fight,
To keep my spirit clean, I would be strong.

A MAN'S JOB

His job wasn't much when he took it;
The man who preceded him there,
Disgusted and weary, forsook it,
To hunt for advancement elsewhere.
The job, before he occupied it,
Was one that commanded poor pay;
From time to time others had tried it,
Each soon to be tempted away.

They said, when they heard he had started,
That he wouldn't stay long in the place,
But, hopeful and keen and stout-hearted,
He worked, with a smile on his face;
His pay wasn't much, but he earned it,
In fact, he earned more than he got;
He looked for each trick, and he turned it;
When a fight was in order he fought.

The job wasn't much, and he knew it,
But he wouldn't be tempted to quit;
He got his teeth in and stuck to it,
He was "there," as they had to admit.
The men who had smiled at him, knowing
That he couldn't last long, were surprised;
The job in good time began growing,
Their prophecies all were revised.

Success, which at first had seemed distant,
Loomed daily more clearly in view;

He soon had to have an assistant,
And later a dozen or two.
Write this on the walls of the hallways,
For those who are doubtful, to scan:
"It may be the job, but not always;
It often depends on the man."

HEALTH, WEALTH, AND HAPPINESS

Why be hurrying after wealth?
The wealthiest man I ever knew
Lived a wretched life
With a jealous wife
Who made him glad to escape from strife
When he closed his account, at fifty-two.

Why be busy pursuing health?
The healthiest man I ever saw
Couldn't read or write,
And his chief delight
Was to toss his clothes in a heap, at night,
And sink to rest on a pile of straw.

Why be sighing for happiness?
Of all the men I have ever seen
The happiest one
Was a tinker's son
Who thought that he was Napoleon,
And the nurse who guarded him Josephine.

A FIGHTER'S CHOICE

"YONDER there is peace," he said,
  Pointing to the countryside;
Age had bent his good gray head,
  Caution had become his guide.
"Yonder there are pebbly brooks,
  Preaching sermons as they flow;
There are sheltered, restful nooks
  Where no warning whistles blow.

"Yonder there are roads that wind
  Leisurely by hill and dale,
Where no spoilers ever find
  Honor all tricked out for sale!
There are pastures wide and green
  Over which sweet scents are blown;
Out there children may be seen
  Sweet with souls that are their own.

"Yonder there is little fear,
  Little cause to cringe or plead;
Here the price of life is dear,
  Profit is the common creed.
Why be wasting precious days
  Where wild struggles never cease?
Yonder there are winding ways
  Leading leisurely to peace."

"Go your way," I answered him,
  "In your veins the blood is cold;

Long ago your eyes grew dim,
You are weak and bent and old;
Yonder, where the hills are blue,
Sit and rest your weary feet,
And may peace abide with you,
And your dreaming there be sweet.

"Here, where each exacting day
Brings new chances for the strong,
I will thrust my doubts away,
Striving hard and hoping long;
Truth may be misunderstood,
Sin may cunningly beguile,
But the fighting still is good,
And the victory worth while."

SCANDAL

A LITTLE scandal trickled through
Where gossip cracked the wall,
And rapidly the volume grew
That was at first so small.
They sought with truth to fill the rent,
To close the ugly breach, but spent
Their efforts all in vain, for, like
The stream that steals out through the dike,
Foul scandal's volume swells and spreads;
Beginning as a subtle slur
It quickly wrecks and rips to shreds
The splendid walls of character.

GLORIOUS TO-MORROWS

To-morrow—fair To-morrow—what joy there is to be
When some sublime To-morrow brings my rewards to me!
The far-off wonder cities, where gilded steeples rise
Are sure, on some To-morrow, to loom before my eyes.

It may be that To-morrow the fortunes I've pursued
No longer will elude me, nor wait still to be wooed;
To-morrow—fair To-morrow—may be my day of days,
May cause my doubts to vanish, and gladden me with praise.

To-morrow may be bringing the knowledge I have sought,
The high rewards that daily have lingered in my thought;
To-morrow may bring pleasures that only I may claim,
And offer me such honors as I may wish to name.

It may not be To-morrow, but out ahead somewhere
A fair To-morrow's waiting with splendors I may share,
With gifts that I shall treasure, and joys that are my due,
My fondest hopes rewarded, my sweetest dreams come true.

To-morrow—bright To-morrow! I pity them that wait,
Denied the joy of hoping for triumph, soon or late,
Who have no cause for thinking courageously to-day
Of glorious To-morrows that must be on the way.

ACTION

LIFE is not mere pleasant weather,
With a soft seat in the shade,
Built for those who care not whether
Any daily gain is made;
But the journey's full of pleasure
For the ones who earn their way,
Giving an unstinted measure
Of brave efforts for their pay.

THE BUILDERS

Men drain the marshy levels dry,
  And pierce the clouds with lofty spires;
They coax the mountain to supply
  The moisture that the plain requires;
They train the wild and wasteful stream
To do the useful work of steam.

Men send their swift fleets through the air,
  They rob the ocean of its treasure;
They track the lightning to its lair
  And bring it forth to serve their pleasure;
They hew, they dig, they build, they plan,
To finish what the Lord began.

Men crowd and crush for worldly things,
  And one rules over many others,
And as with paupers, so with kings—
  Each wishes to outshine his brothers;
The nations rise to matchless might,
Then dwindle and pass out of sight.

Men make the deserts bloom; they take
  From this and add to that, and wonder
When, now and then, the foolish make
  Attempts to save the dog that's under;
Inspired by pride or urged by greed,
Men grasp and gain beyond their need.

Men plan and build; their skill is shown
In mighty ship, on lofty tower,
And then their work is overthrown
By Nature in a dreadful hour;
Stunned for a day, men pause, and then
They get to work and build again.

FORSAKEN

WHY have you ceased to come to me
When sorrow tarries in your breast?
Why do you fail, my boy, to see
That I of all your friends am best?
Why have you ceased to let me share
The troubles that you have to bear?

Why do you come to me no more
When you have cause for boyish pride,
Nor ask for my advice before
You venture where you must decide?
What fault is mine, that you forget
How gladly I would serve you yet?

Come back, my boy, along the way
On which you have been faring far;
Come back, if only for a day,
To where your dusty playthings are;
Come, if but for an hour, to be
The child that fondly trusted me.

AN UNWELCOME GUEST

HERE's your hat, be on your way,
Prophet of the evil day;
I am busy being glad;
Keep your hopeless words for those
Who are nursing petty woes,
And insist on being sad.

I have heard your kind before,
Go your way, and come no more
With your warnings and your fears;
Look for those who like to think
There is cause for hope to sink
Deeper as each day appears.

Do not linger to explain
That the wicked only gain
Pride and profit and applause;
I have faith that bids me still
To believe in God's good will
And in every holy cause.

Waste no time in telling me
That the worst is yet to be,
That the Golden Age is past;
I refuse to sit and moan
For the chances that are flown,
Or for joys that couldn't last.

I have blundered more or less,
But the pleasures I possess
  Make my ills seem small and few;
I decline to groan or grieve,
Much preferring to believe
  That my hopes are coming true.

Prophet of the evil day,
Cease to tarry; go your way;
  I am busy being glad;
Share your gloom with those who sigh
And are being worried by
  Troubles they have never had.

THE WILL TO TRY

Let them say, when I have ceased
  Striving where the strong remain,
That my talents were the least,
  That I brought the world no gain,
But let no man say that I
Did not have the heart to try.

Let them say that I was weak,
  That I stumbled on the way,
Filled with eagerness to speak,
  Lacking anything to say,
But let no man say my soul
Urged me to no splendid goal.

THINKIN' O' MOTHER

"THINKIN' o' mother," he said, "and thinkin'
o' what she'd say
Was the reason I didn't give up and start to
the bad that day;
Thinkin' o' mother again and thinkin' o' what
she'd feel
Is the reason I ain't a thief—the money was
there to steal!

"Thinkin' o' mother at home was the reason
I went ahead
Facin' the world again, no matter what people
said;
Thinkin' o' mother was all could ever have
held me back
When I stood on the pier that night where the
water was deep and black.

"Thinkin' o' mother, I stopped when my blade
was in the air,
And I uttered a prayer instead o' doin' that
dark deed there!
Thinkin' o' mother, I tried when it seemed no
use to try,
And I ain't goin' hungry no more, and I'm
lookin' you in the eye!

"Thinkin' o' mother, that's all! You put the
story in rhyme;
It ain't no beautiful tale, there's nothin' about
it sublime;
But tell the feller who's down—I'm passin the
lesson to you—
Just to keep thinkin' o' mother, and I guess
he'll worry through."

FOR VALUE RECEIVED

THE world gives us joy for enjoyment
That we have the grace to impart;
The heart is soon out of employment
That ceases to gladden some heart;
The pleasure and profit of living
Are sweetened by effort and zeal;
The world gives us gains for our giving,
And not for the empty appeal.

A FAIR PRICE

THE world is full of ups and downs,
Of primrose paths and ways that wind,
And a smile is worth a hundred frowns
In any market you can find.

KEEP YOUNG

PERHAPS it is long since your topnot departed;
Perhaps you have trouble in lacing your shoes,
But quit overeating and don't be down-hearted,
Get up in the mornings expecting good news.
Don't sit in your corner because it is raining,
Be sure to hum all the new songs that are sung;
Forget the small reasons you have for complaining—
Keep young!

Don't let the gay sprigs who are dancing ignore you;
Let them see that you, too, can fling out a light heel;
Forget that the ways of young simpletons bore you,
Get joy out of something besides a good meal.
Take off your black necktie and wear something brighter,
Start out with a song on the tip of your tongue;
Pull up your belt buckle a hole or two tighter—
Keep young!

You merely imagine you're growing rheumatic,
You can get yourself limber again if you will;
Look out for the things that will make you ecstatic,
Find pleasure in youthful companionship still.
Get out of that big cushioned chair and be stirring
Where beauty goes by and where tinsel is strung,
Plunge into the thick of the surging and whirring—
Keep young!

Forget to be grieving about your lost chances,
No sighing will cause any chance to return;
The girls are still putting a charm in their glances,
And if you will watch there is much you may learn.
Don't sit in your corner because of the weather,
Start out with a song on the tip of your tongue;
As long as your body and soul are together—
Keep young!

BLIGHTING IMPROVEMENTS

THE old town's not as it used to be,
They've abolished the toll gate under the hill;
It came as a sickening shock to me
To find no trace of the old red mill.
The old covered bridge that was plastered o'er
With circus posters in Summer days
Is spanning the narrowing stream no more;
Time plays havoc in various ways.

Where the town pump was there's a teashop now;
The Union Tavern has disappeared,
And another old landmark, Elisha Howe,
Is gone, with his white and voluminous beard.
Where the little red school house used to stand
There's a larger building, of brick and stone;
The signs are many on every hand
To show how the little old town has grown.

A library looms at the corner where
Ed Morrison's livery stable stood,
And the wagon shop is no longer there,
With its smell of paint and its seasoned wood.
The maples are big and the elms are tall,
Strange, new names on the signs appear;

There once was a time when I knew them all—
That was back in a distant year.

Dust is blown through the streets no more,
By many changes the town is marked;
Where horses gnawed hitching rails before,
Flivvers, untroubled by flies, are parked.
I dreamed of it once in a tender way;
Wherever I roamed, it was home to me,
But they've dolled it up, and I'm sorry to say
The old town's not as it used to be.

IF THE CAUSE BE JUST

Dishonor is not in defeat
That follows courageous endeavor;
Where ruin is dark and complete
The scene may be sacred forever.

Though brought to the sorriest case,
By circumstance bitterly cheated,
They taste not the gall of disgrace
Whom power alone has defeated.

"For you," he said, "my little man,
I have to work away,
Forever earning all I can,
Without a restful day!
But for your needs I might sometimes
Turn lightly from all care,
And, traveling through distant climes,
Behold the wonders there.

"You keep me bound in heavy chains,
As slaves have been before,
But I am paid for all my pains
A thousand times, and more!
When round my neck I feel your arms,
And when you clutch my hands
I cease to wish to view the charms
Of distant wonderlands.

"And, little girl, you bring to me
A debt that must be paid;
You've bound me into slavery
That I may not evade;
I've had to turn from many a plan
I hoped I might pursue,
And daily do the best I can
In humble ways for you.

"You have encumbered me with fears
I never had before;

The paths I trod in careless years
I shall pursue no more,
But you have sweetly cured me of
My longing to be free;
The price is little for the love
That you have brought to me."

AT PARTING

Now we will start upon our separate ways,
And try to find new pleasures and forget;
Others, perhaps, will give you welcome praise,
Others may learn to love you—and regret.

What might have been is lost—for wrong or right;
Some hopes that you inspired I have resigned;
But do not think that I shall coddle spite,
Or cast away my faith in womankind.

I shall be glad sometimes; I shall perceive
The beauty of the Springtime blossom still;
I shall not sit in any nook and grieve,
Nor cease to have ambitions to fulfill.

But there will be a difference, after this;
When any eager wish of mine comes true,
And when Good Fortune cheers me, I shall miss
The joy of rushing with my joy to you.

SEE IT THROUGH

Given flesh and bones and senses
And a soul to lose or save,
Every one, at birth, commences
The rough journey to the grave!
None may choose his own complexion
Or prescribe the time or place;
None is granted a selection
Even as to sex or race.

Life's a battle with diseases;
No one ever, rich or poor,
May be doing as he pleases,
Death the one thing that is sure!
Everywhere some danger lurking,
Pleasures far to seek and brief;
Constantly the need of working,
Tenderness the twin of grief.

Right repellent, wrong alluring,
Hidden dangers everywhere;
Pains and aches and long enduring,
Disappointments and despair;
Knowledge gained through patient striving,
Faith elusive, hopes deferred;
Time the master grimly driving,
Youth too quickly past and blurred.

Lost illusions, futile sorrow,
  Empty visions, plans destroyed;
Never knowing that to-morrow
  May not be a silent void;
Always the unparted curtain
  Shutting off what is to be;
Heaven a hope that is uncertain,
  Over an uncharted sea.

But why sit in silence, fearing
  What to-morrow may disclose?
Courage has no time for hearing
  Weakness wailing o'er its woes.
Think not of life's ills too gravely,
  Shun its evils, seek the good;
Mark the goals, and let us bravely
  Play the game as sportsmen should.

TAINTED

If you have found a moldy grape—
  One turning to decay—
There is no need to toss the whole
  Delicious bunch away.

If one man has betrayed your trust
  Why leave your faith behind,
And turn in anger or disgust
  To doubting all mankind?

WHY DON'T YOU FIGHT?

You despise the coward who runs away,
Lacking the nerve to put up a fight,
But you cheer the boy with the grit to stay
And defend his honor with all his might.
He may lack the strength or the weight or skill
That he needs to win, or to have a chance,
But you like his courage and praise his will;
When he falls you look with a tender glance.

Why do you turn from your job with sighs,
Whipped before you have done your best?
If another had hit you between the eyes
You would try to return it with interest.
Why are you beaten and in despair
Because obstructions have kept you back?
Why don't you fight, as you would if there
Were a bully who merited your attack?

You have cheers for those who refuse to run
When the shells are bursting on every side;
You give them praise when the fight is done,
And their every wound is a cause for pride;
They might have turned, and they might have fled,
Thinking their task too hard to meet,
But you cheer because they remained, instead,
To rise victorious from defeat.

Why do you sit in your lonely nook,
  Thinking that life is too hard to bear?
Why did you stand on the bridge and look
  At the swirling water below you there?
You admire the boy who is game; you praise
  The soldier with courage to conquer fright;
Why are you letting unlucky days
  Make you a coward? Why don't you fight?

A NEVER-FAILING DOCTOR

TIME is ever smoothing
  Down the jagged hills,
Making fair the slopes,
Healing wounds, and soothing
  People's aches and ills,
Rousing drooping hopes.

In the dismal places
  That through all the past
Have been haunts of care
Time has brightened faces,
  Banishing the last
Traces of despair.

Presently the sorrow
  That besets you now
Time will charm away;
Fearlessly, to-morrow,
  You may wonder how
Doubt came yesterday.

LUCKY DAYS

SUNDAY is a day I like;
It's a fine day, wet or fair;
A good day on which to strike
Grudges from the heart and spike
Lids on hatred and despair.

Monday always seems to bring
Chances that are new and fine;
It's a day on which to cling
To high purposes and swing
Strong and bravely into line.

Every Tuesday brings along
Upward pathways for our feet;
More of right and less of wrong,
And sometimes a bit of song
That is full of love and sweet.

Wednesday is a day for trust
In the Providence that guides,
Doing well the things we must,
Gaining wisdom, being just,
Pressing on with steady strides.

Thursday is a day of grace
For the willing and sincere;
Though the Sun may hide his face
He is in his proper place,
And on duty, never fear.

Every Friday in its turn
  Brings a chance to start anew,
Something it is good to learn,
Faith to keep and praise to earn,
  Worthy ventures to pursue.

Saturday is always kind
  To the hopeful and the wise;
Foolish doubts are left behind,
And the paths before us wind
  Where the Hills of Promise rise.

JUDGMENT

The tower's beauty disappears
  From him who views it at its base;
We find out after many years
  The greatness of a man or race.

The speech that we condemn to-day,
  The purpose that we think a crime,
May, after years have gone their way,
  Be called inspired and seem sublime,

"You have not seen the cherry trees
In bright, full blossom in Japan;
Your small world lies between the seas,
Where crowding people work and plan;
You have not stood in Delhi when
Viceregal splendor was displayed;
Your life is cramped; you toil where men
Are crushed beneath the wheels of trade.

"You have not sat beside the Nile
And dreamed of cities that were there
When all the world was young, and while
The daughters of the kings were fair;
You have not ventured to behold
That island in the eastern sea
Where young Ulysses may have strolled
At twilight with Penelope.

"You never have beheld the bay
In which proud Naples bathes her feet,
Nor stood beside the Appian Way
When April's fragrances were sweet;
You have not stood where Cæsar fell,
Nor trod the soil that Brutus trod;
Assailed by daily needs, you dwell
Where Commerce is the people's god."

And he was right; I never had
Seen any of the things he named,

But frequently I have been glad;
Work doesn't make me feel ashamed;
I've heard the shouts of children who
Were filled with joy and free from fear,
And one to whom my heart is true
Knows why I like to linger here.

HIS SHIP

"My ship," he said, "will come some day,
With riches in its hold for me";
He let his best years drift away,
What time he watched beside the sea.

When age had made him blind and weak
He wondered at the long delay;
The reason was not far to seek;
He never sent a ship away.

ALWAYS A CHANCE

We sigh because no chance remains
For us to win renown or praise,
Or claim the dear, elusive gains
That we have wished for all our days,
And, while we sigh, some unknown one
Steps forth, to make himself sublime
By doing what we might have done
If we had thought of it in time.

"It's long," he said, "since first I led
You to this table, dear,
And you sat over there, alone,
And I sat lonely here.

"A year or two passed by, and you
No longer sat alone;
A little one was in your arms—
Your darling, and my own.

"And then another year or so,
And some one else was there;
Our firstborn came to sit near me;
The baby claimed your care.

"The years have sped since first I led
You to this table, dear,
And you looked queenly at your end,
And I felt kingly here.

"To-day, I look across at you,
And on each side I see
A row of hungry children who
Have made hard work for me.

"We've added leaves, one after one,
And you are far away;

Our table steadily has grown
Since that first happy day.

"But while we sit so far apart—
You yonder, and I here—
Two rows of hearts link my fond heart
To your true heart, my dear.

"Thank God for every extra leaf
That we have had to add;
There, put away your handkerchief,
And let us both be glad."

APPEARANCES

His chin was strong; he had a nose
Such as had made a Cæsar proud;
His neck from splendid shoulders rose,
He would have loomed in any crowd,
And, watching him, I wondered why
Some men can climb while others slip;
He brought my soup and fish and pie,
And thanked me for a little tip.

I WILL

I WILL start anew this morning, with a higher,
fairer creed;
I will cease to be complaining of my ruthless
neighbor's greed;
I will cease to sit repining while my duty's call
is clear;
I will waste no moment whining, and my heart
shall know no fear.

I will look sometimes about me for the things
that merit praise;
I will search for hidden beauties that elude the
grumbler's gaze;
I will try to find contentment in the paths that
I must tread;
I will cease to have resentment when another
moves ahead.

I will not be swayed by envy when my rival's
strength is shown;
I will not deny his merit, but I'll strive to prove
my own;
I will try to see the beauty spread before me,
rain or shine;
I will cease to preach your duty, and be more
concerned with mine.

AN INFALLIBLE SIGN

We meet and pass, we men who learn
That favor goes by chance or choice,
And if I speak you may discern
No note of friendship in my voice;
But when a smile comes to your lips
I greet you with the answering sign;
The oldest of all fellowships
A friendly smile makes yours and mine.

The Malay and the Eskimo
May come together, north or south,
And neither of the twain may know
The words that pass the other's mouth.
Their gestures, even, may convey
No meaning that is quick or clear,
But when they smile they find the way
To banish doubt and cease to fear.

The spoken word may take the shape
Of no fair image in men's minds,
But from the farthest Lapland cape
To where Magellan's Channel winds,
From Ganges to the Amazon,
And from the Yukon to the Nile—
Wherever men go toiling on—
There is one meaning for a smile.

MIRACULOUS

THERE are so many paths that wind
By easy stages down to sin,
It's such an easy thing to find
Gay haunts where crime and vice begin,
That one may marvel every day
To see among the young, and old,
How few there are who go astray,
How many choose the safer way,
Their names obscure, their worth untold.

There are so many pitfalls made
For those who blindly rush along,
So many false fronts are displayed
Where nothing's right and all is wrong,
That wonder comes to him who sees
How many men move straight ahead,
Unswerved by sugared sophistries,
And deaf to all the specious pleas
By which the thoughtless are misled.

So many ways there are that lead
To that which fools may think success,
Their prizes are so rich whom greed
Induces to be pitiless,
That one who sees must find it plain
That men grow God-like, since so few
Depart from righteous ways for gain,
And since so many can refrain
From follies that the weak pursue.

A LARK SINGING IN OCTOBER

THE warm winds blowing from the West,
The dandelions on the slopes,
Have banished silence from your breast
And filled your heart with eager hopes:
To you, as joyously you sing,
There comes no fear of future ills;
You feel the warmth and cheer of spring,
And have no dread of winter's chills.

I listen to your brave, sweet song
And think how brief it needs must be;
The meadows will be white ere long,
The last leaves blown from yonder tree;
The mildness that has brought you cheer
I only half enjoy, alas,
Because the world will soon be drear,
Because its joys so soon shall pass.

'Twere well if I were as thou art,
To future cares and sorrows dumb—
If I might banish from my heart
The dread of ills that are to come;
'Twere well if I might ne'er destroy
A pleasure that the day has brought—
Might never lose a present joy
Through terror that may be for naught.

SMILES

Don't forget sometimes to take
Home a smile or two at night;
If the profits that you make
Do not bring you much delight,
Why take home a bunch of care?
It's a foolish thing to do;
Park your trouble out somewhere,
And take home a smile or two.

When the sweet stenographer
Treats you to a friendly glance,
Bravely you smile back at her,
Happy to have had the chance;
And the pretty little clerk,
When your purchases are made,
Finds new pleasure in her work
For the smile you have displayed.

When the boss invites you in,
Leaving other things to wait,
You approach him with a grin,
Or with hope, at any rate,
And through all the day you find,
Or you do, if you are wise,
That it pays to be inclined
To keep twinkles in your eyes.

Greet the elevator boy
With a smile upon your lip;
If the switchboard girl is coy,
Hand her out a merry quip.
With your smile you always make
Other people's moments bright;
But don't fail sometimes to take
Home a smile or two at night.

BRIGHTENING THE WAY

Give us wisdom, if you can,
You who fit yourselves to teach;
Make us each a better man,
If you may, you men who preach;
Make us see that sin is vile,
But please also make us smile.

Show us how we may progress,
You who build, and you who write;
Mark the highways to success,
Help to keep the goals in sight,
But please don't forget that smiles
Help to shorten rocky miles.

KNOWLEDGE

If only we could see what lies ahead,
If we might look beyond to-morrow's portals,
I wonder if we should, absolved from dread,
Be happy-visaged and contented mortals?
Would all the hate and heartaches disappear,
Would joy blot out all memories of sorrow—
Would courage come to take the place of fear,
If we could see what lies beyond to-morrow?

If we could know what destinies the fates
Are shaping now for us who blindly blunder
And oft in vain assault forbidden gates,
How would the knowledge profit us, I wonder?
Would failure cease to break the hearts of men?
Would night's deep, silent darkness lose its terror?
Would he that ought to dig lay down the pen?
Would all who stumble cease to grope in error?

We know that right is right, that wrong is wrong,
That thus it was ordained at time's beginning;

We know that honors to the wise belong,
That sorrow is the heavy price of sinning,
Yet foolishly we sin and venture where
The currents, soon or late, will drag us under;
If somehow all the future were laid bare,
How would beholding profit us, I wonder?

THE ROAD TO SUCCESS

The road to success is crowded,
But don't be discouraged yet;
Keep on, you eager beginner,
The crowd will be thinner and thinner
The farther along you get.

THE DYNAMO

Hope is the world's great driving force,
The power that urges men ahead;
He faces backward on the course,
And serves no more, whose hopes are dead.

NOT WITHOUT PRICE

We worry over our defeats,
  We mourn the prize we could not seize,
And always the forbidden sweets
  Leave longest cherished memories.
We soon forget the easy ways
  Where carelessly we moved along;
The fearful, tearful, stormy days
  Should serve to make our courage strong.

We cannot learn to be resigned
  When Fate appears to crowd us back;
The joys that come to us we find
  Much poorer than the ones we lack.
We envy others who have done
  The things we tried and failed to do;
The man whose million has been won
  Is grieved because it isn't two.

Our minds are on the might-have-beens,
  The chances that we sought in vain;
Defeat is where their strength begins
  Who reach the heights we wish to gain.
The great must learn to profit by
  The pain that disappointment brings;
We mutter sadly, you and I,
  When cheated out of little things.

Our hearts and hopes are always set
Upon the present scheme or plan,
And, failing, sadly we forget
Where courage died and doubt began.
Perhaps despair has been the cost
Where laurels decorate a brow;
If Dante had not loved and lost
He might not be remembered now.

EVEN NOW

SOMEWHERE a maiden walks beside
Her lover down a lane,
And speaks the promise he has tried
To win before, in vain.

Somewhere a happy mother bends
Above her babe, and sings,
Too glad to envy her who spends
Her all for jeweled things.

Somewhere a man whose bruises ache,
Whose plans are all upset,
Is rising stubbornly, to make
Good Fortune serve him yet.

"BEFORE you came," he said, "I was so blind;
  There was so much that I had failed to see;
In all my daily ventures now I find
  Rare beauty where gray dullness used to be.

"The birds are singing sweeter songs, I think,
  Than were the songs I used to hear them sing;
The blossoms have a richer, rarer pink
  Than they possessed in any former Spring.

"A softer touch, it seems, is in the breeze;
  I find much more to praise, much less to blame;
I claim a thousand soulful ecstasies
  Such as I never knew before you came.

"You float as some bright angel through my dreams,
  You are my earliest thought when I awake;
I watch the world grow lovely, and it seems
  God must have made the Springtime for your sake.

"In all that's glorious I perceive your face,
  In music sweet and soft I hear your name;
Elysium is not half so fair a place
  As this delightful world is since you came!"

They paused where blossoms dangled overhead;
He noticed how her long dark lashes curled,
And was about to praise them when she said:
"Your hokum listens good, I'll tell the world."

A PLAN WORTH TRYING

His tasks were hard, the days were long,
His planning seldom seemed to pay;
He labored, thinking all was wrong,
Obstructions always barred his way;
But that was when he sought success
To satisfy his selfishness.

He finds his tasks delightful now,
And joy is in his every gain;
The lines are fading from his brow,
He pities people who complain,
For he is having sweet success
In giving others happiness.

THE LITTLE STREET

At one side of a little town
  There is a quiet little street,
Where once a boy ran up and down,
  With unseen wings upon his feet,
And when the lilacs blossom there
They make the world seem doubly fair.

No streams of traffic roar along
  The little street, by night or day;
The little street is like a song,
  A little sad, a little gay;
Each turn a bar, each tree a note
That some sublime composer wrote.

In June-time once an eager lad
  Learned something in that little street;
The moonbeams flickered and were glad,
  The drifting fragrances were sweet;
How kind the shadows were to hide
The kiss that else had been denied.

A cottage halfway down the hill
  Was restful in the far-off days,
And there a mother watches still,
  With something wistful in her gaze;
The room that once a boy upset
Is cluttered with his playthings yet.

It's far away, the little town,
  But all the highways everywhere
That do their winding up and down
  Seem always to be leading there,
And ending in the little street
Where young love's promises were sweet.

LOVE CARES NOT FOR NAMES

Her name was only Maggie, and his was merely John,
  And she was some one's nursemaid, and he worked by the day;
John wore no braided jacket with medals pinned thereon,
  And Maggie wasn't gifted in any special way.

But John made love to Maggie, and Maggie's heart was glad,
  And this I tell you frankly, and beg you to believe:
Their case was as romantic as if the lover had
  Been christened Montmorency, his loved one Genevieve.

REVERSION TO TYPE

ALWAYS upward, always onward, farther daily
from the cave:
Man has ceased to be a savage, he may yet
avoid the grave;
He has taken on refinement, and begins to use
his bean;
He has turned from filthy habits, and en-
deavors to be clean,
But he suddenly relapses to his wild and primal
state,
And goes out for bloody vengeance when
another lures his mate.

He was once a crawling creature, covered,
probably, with slime,
But ambition stirred within him; he has learned
to be sublime;
He has linked the seas, and driven lengthy
tunnels through the hills,
He outflies the soaring eagle, and is leaving off
his ills;
He has finally grown god-like; he's a wonder,
he is great,
But he bids farewell to reason when another
lures his mate.

Woman, too, has been advancing; she is won-
derful and sweet;

She has taught man to be decent; she has made
his joys complete;
She has tamed him and refined him; she has
coaxed him to be kind;
She has ceased to sigh for baubles, and is
broadening her mind,
But she suddenly relapses, as a woman only
can,
And wants vengeance that is bloody when
another steals her man.

She's as lovely as an angel; by her beauty and
her grace
She imparts man's inspiration—makes the
world a better place;
She is tender, she is patient; she is glorious and
pure;
She has plumbed the depths of reason; man
may doubt, but she is sure;
Far across the misty ages lies the point where
she began,
But she's back there in an instant when another
steals her man.

SECOND CHILDHOOD

He has ceased to wish to claim
Joys that wealth alone may bring;
He has ceased to think of fame
As the world's most splendid thing;
He has traveled far, and now,
Having put his cares away,
He has ceased to wonder how
He may make his ventures pay.

Sitting in his peaceful nook,
Seeing little, hearing less,
There's contentment in his look,
In his few words hopefulness;
By the friendliness they show,
And the faith they have discerned
Little children seem to know
That his childhood has returned.

He has ceased to care to part
The few locks upon his brow;
There is not within his heart
Any room for envy now;
Free from worldliness and guile,
Having turned from high affairs,
If his clothes are out of style
It is little that he cares.

Sweet the innocence that lies
In a baby's trusting gaze,
Sweet the candor in its eyes
Ere it learns of worldly ways;
Sweet the simpleness of men
After all the strife is past—
Sweet the honest frankness when
Vanity departs, at last.

BROTHERHOOD

INHERITING old hates, men brag
Concerning race and blood, and drag
The flags of rival clans in dust,
But on the haughty prince's hands
The veins run as on his who stands
Beside the gate, and begs a crust,
And Nature gives the Eskimo
The same curve in his little toe
That he has who as lord is hailed,
Yet men by men are still assailed;
They brag of blood and boast of race,
Tribe scoffs at tribe, clan wars with clan,
As if the hated stranger's face
Were not the visage of a man.

A FIGHT WORTH WINNING

LORD, what a lot of fussing and of fretting
This mix-up that is known as Life entails!
Desiring, dreading, boasting, and regretting;
To-day fair winds; to-morrow hindering gales.
Striving, planning, hoping, and achieving;
Now and then an hour of pure delight;
Bad faith, and broken promises, and grieving;
Fantastic dreams that trouble us at night.

Ambitions that are seldom satisfied,
The constant longing for the unattained;
Defeat, deception, empty boasting, pride;
The mysteries that never are explained;
The struggle to be free from hateful ties,
The obligations that insist on crowding in;
The things that are offensive to our eyes;
So easy to go wrong; so hard to win.

The painful tricks that Chance insists on playing;
The fear of what to-morrow is to bring;
The irksome ills, and always o'er us swaying
The sword suspended by a slender string!
The terror of old age, the futile striving
To hide from Fate, to ward off Sorrow's blows;

The constant effort, and the ceaseless driving;
The journey o'er the road no mortal knows.

The prayers that are unanswered, and the cost
Of keeping our uncertain faith alive;
The glittering illusions that are lost;
The crumbling of our goals when we arrive!
But there is joy in fighting bravely through,
In tearing the obstructions from the way,
In getting at the job one has to do,
And learning how to make the effort pay.

AN EXCEPTION

"I'd trust my husband anywhere," she said;
"My faith in him is full, 'tis satisfied;
I know that all his thoughts are fair," she said—
"I know he'd put temptations all aside.

"I know that he is strong, sublime," she said;
"I know that all his love is mine, for e'er;
I'd trust my husband anywhere," she said—
"Unless a woman happened to be there."

He started from scratch, with a commoner's chance,
Where others were anxious to beat him;
He found no smooth way over which to advance,
And many were watching to cheat him.

He saved and he hoped when his wages were small,
The favors he asked were denied him,
And he often was pressed very close to the wall
By the others who struggled beside him.

There were years when it seemed that his hoping was vain,
That he might as well drop his ambitions;
He fought a hard fight for each poor little gain
That he won against cheerless conditions.

But he learned that each fight seemed to bring him new strength
And add to the pleasure of winning;
And others were glad to befriend him, at length,
Who had hindered him at the beginning.

When riches and power were at his command
And need had been left in the distance

No man was unwilling to lend him a hand,
  Each eagerly offered assistance. . . .

The big river flows from a source that is small,
  Gaining volume each mile and each hour,
And the little streams finally offer their all
  To add to its breadth and its power.

LITTLENESS

The darkest night is not so dark
  That gloom enshrouds the beacon light;
The dreariest of all the days
Is not so cheerless that sweet praise
  Can make no gloomy corner bright.

The farthest star seems not so small
  As is the soul of him who grieves,
Not that he is denied applause,
Or lacks attention, but because
  Of honor some one else receives.

WHO COULD SAY MORE?

Poetic feelings filled his breast, romance was
in his mind;
The world was at its loveliest, and every breeze
was kind;
The girl to whom he spoke was fair and young
and slim and sweet;
She made him glad that Chance or Fate had
caused their paths to meet.

"All loveliness you have," said he; "your cheeks
are roses red;
Your lips are honeysuckle, and each eye a pansy
bed;
Your throat's a lily; your small ears are dainty
pinks and rare;
Your chin's a snowdrop, and your brow is
wreathed with maidenhair."

The lovely maiden looked away and sighed a
little sigh;
"You've skipped my nose," he heard her say;
"please tell me, won't you, why?
My cheeks, my ears, my eyes, my lips, my
throat, my chin, my hair
Are on your list, but not my nose, and why is it
not there?"

"Your lips are honeysuckle, and your ears are
pinks," he said;
"Rebellious wisps of maidenhair are clustered
round your head;
Your cheeks are soft, and each is like a beauti-
ful pink rose;
As for your nose, fair maid, it is the loveliest
thing that blows."

WORK WELL DONE

Isn't it good, when the morning's bright,
To have work to do that is worth your while;
To be free from ills and to have the right
To begin your task with a hopeful smile?

Isn't it good, when the sun is low,
And evening comes, with its magic spell,
To claim the rest you have earned, to know,
As you look at your work, that you've done
it well?

AT A WINDOW

A YEAR ago I used to see
  Her walk beside him to the car;
Their fingers were entwined and she
Was very beautiful—ah, me!
  How dutiful young lovers are!
The lovelight shone within their eyes,
They said a score of sad good-byes
  Ere she turned back her lonely way
  To wait and wonder through the day,
And waste her love in eager sighs.

At length he came alone; I thought
  Their blissful days forever past,
And oft I wondered vaguely what
Delightful changes would be wrought
  If honeymoons could always last.
I pitied him because she came
No more to clasp his hand and claim
  His parting kiss or stand awhile
  With something wistful in her smile,
Her final word his whispered name.

This morning I beheld him close
  A door behind him and descend,
And then he turned to pluck a rose,
And I no longer shall suppose
  Their gladness to be at an end!
She stood inside the window there

And held with proud and tender care
A baby forth for him to see—
How bright a world this world can be
Despite the trouble and despair.

THE NEWS BEARER

COME not in haste at night to spoil my rest
By telling me my dearest plan has failed;
Come not when peace and pride are in my breast
To tell me that my honor is assailed.

Oh, let your steps be slow when you must bring
News that will cause my pleasure to depart;
Be not in haste to tell me of the thing
That shall enkindle anger in my heart.

But speed upon your journey, I implore,
When you can bring me news I wish to hear;
Arouse me from my dreams; beat on my door;
Deprive me of no instant of good cheer!

CHEATED

WHAT does Springtime mean to those
  Who have no friendship with the soil?
They know, perhaps, when Winter goes,
  But they should see the ferns uncoil,
And hear the songs that April brings
  To every marshy place and hedge;
In May a million magic things
  Are done beyond the city's edge.

They little know what Spring can mean
  Who tread on pavements wearily,
Where they may never see how green
  And big the lilac buds can be.
How can they know, who must obey
  Where rules are steadfast and severe,
When Winter's gloom is blown away
  And Springtime wonders reappear?

The children who have never played
  At making dams in gushing streams,
How can they know when Spring has made
  New highways to the Land of Dreams?
They huddle where the walls are high,
  And where in April rubbish burns,
With little cause for caring why
  The willow's golden gleam returns.

The children who inhabit hives
In which no honey's ever made,
How can they know, when Spring arrives
And love is law in glen and glade?
It's little that they learn of God
And little they can comprehend
Who never feel the springy sod
Beneath their feet, at Winter's end.

PARTING WAYS

THERE'S a way to the right and a way to the wrong,
A way for the weak, and a way for the strong,
Two ways that forever, at each day's dawn,
Are marked for men to be traveling on.

The way to the wrong or the way to the right
Each man must be choosing, no third is in sight,
And no one, however depraved or sublime,
May follow both ways at the selfsame time.

WORTH REMEMBERING

Let's remember, now and then,
You and I, who, years ago,
Learned what all but foolish men,
Soon or late, are sure to know:
We have passed where others crowd
Eagerly to learn the truth;
Let's remember, and be proud
To assist in serving youth.

There was much we missed and much
That we never now may claim;
Joys have slipped beyond our clutch,
Life is not a schoolboy's game,
But we need not be resigned,
Or, forgetting to be glad,
Fail to help the boys to find
Pleasures that we never had.

We have come by winding ways,
Passing dangers that were deep;
Luck, perhaps, deserves our praise
For the faith that we may keep;
Shall we fail to care at all
Whether they whose hopes are new
Pass with pride, or blindly fall
Where we, somehow, muddled through?

Turning to extend a hand
  Where our help is fondly sought,
Let us try to understand
  Things we long ago forgot.
Everywhere obstructions lie,
  Evil still has bright decoys;
Let's remember, you and I,
  That we also once were boys.

GREATNESS

The scientist who learns how far
From earth the flaming planets are
  Is not as great as he whose cheer
Has caused some one whose hope has died
To hope again and feel the pride
  That smothers doubt and conquers fear.

The soldier who, with gleaming sword,
Assails and routs the savage horde
  Is not as great a man as he
Who tenderly and bravely dries
The tears that dim an orphan's eyes,
  Or sets a bully's victim free.

STILL IN THE FIGHT

I HAVE failed in a thousand cases,
But I still have the heart to try;
I am scarred in a hundred places,
No darling of Luck am I!
In many a crucial hour
I have hoped, and been scorned and kicked;
But never has Fate had power
To convince me that I was licked.

I have trusted and been mistaken;
My friendship has been betrayed;
I have struggled alone, forsaken
By men who have had my aid;
I have listened to those who flattered,
Their motives misunderstood,
But my faith has remained unshattered;
I believe in the ultimate good.

I ask for no unearned pleasure,
No pathway through flowery lanes;
I offer a full, fair measure
Of effort for all my gains;
I'll try, though the pace be grilling,
Nor whine if I'm tripped or tricked,
As long as my soul's unwilling
To let me believe I am licked.

DON'T DO IT

Come not with a face that is dark and long
And a foolish grievance you won't forget,
Assuring me that the world's gone wrong,
That heaven and earth are all upset;
If you must be fretful, please go and fret
Where I'll not hear what you have to say;
I like the world and I will not let
Your sneers or sniveling spoil my day.

I claim no right to destroy your cheer
If my plans are wrecked or my efforts fail,
And I'll not expect you to stay to hear
If I come mumbling a dismal tale;
So if you think you have cause to wail
Be good enough to respect my plea;
Go park your grouch on some lonely trail,
And don't come spoiling the day for me.

The winds that blow are not always fair
And the morning's glow is not always bright;
The foolish only are free from care,
Believing that all that is is right;
But the world would gleam with a new delight
And have braver courage and less dismay
If no man came with his private spite
To insist on spoiling another's day.

WHEN CLOUDS ARE DARK

We gather wisdom as we grow,
Our childhood fears are left behind;
The faith that filled us long ago
Becomes absurd, and is resigned;
We smile, while pleasure comes our way,
At doubts from which our minds are free,
But when the clouds grow thick and gray
We feel inclined sometimes to say
The prayers we learned at mother's knee.

We learn to grasp the larger truth,
We see beyond the narrow skies
That framed the universe when youth
Prevented us from being wise;
The superstitions and the fears
To which so secretly we clung
Are scattered back along the years,
The dread that comes when night appears
Is for the weak and for the young.

We get beyond horizons where
All things were once supposed to cease;
We learn a little here and there,
Our hidden vanities increase;
We turn from narrow paths, and seek
The wide ways leading to the heights;
Self-confident and wise, we speak

With condescension of the weak
  Who pray according to their lights.

But now and then there comes a time
  When wisdom seems to lose its weight,
When simple faith becomes sublime,
  And all things else are second rate.
When proud conceit is cast away
  And danger threatens, piously
We kneel as trusting children may
And find it comforting to say
  The prayers we learned at mother's knee.

FRIENDLINESS

The friendly raindrops lend their aid
  To every blade of grass;
The fragrant flowers are kindly swayed
  Where friendly breezes pass.
The brook that glides along the glade
  Finds friendly shallows there,
And God was friendly when He made
  The friendly world so fair.

A PROFITABLE DAY

YESTERDAY was not so good to me,
Things I had hoped to do were left undone;
The world was drab, or so it seemed to be,
Among the bruised and beaten I was one.
In many ante-rooms I cooled my heels,
While others won the favors that I sought;
If men whose luck was good enjoyed their meals,
No pearls were in the oysters that I got.

I had no cordial greeting anywhere,
As yesterday I made my weary round;
I hunted hard for prospects that were fair,
And blundered always on forbidden ground.
Suspicion seemed to be in every glance
That men whose time was precious cast my way;
I looked in vain for any lucky chance
And any sign of promise—yesterday.

But yesterday was not a total loss;
There was some useful practice that I had
In standing bravely up beneath my cross
And fighting through conditions that were bad.
I learned, I think, to be a little more
Adept in keeping back unbidden sighs;

My sympathy is deeper than before
For beaten men with dimmed and weary eyes.

And now it is to-day again—TO-DAY,
With chances that are still untried and new!
I may not find an unobstructed way
In which to seek the fortunes I pursue;
But yesterday is gone, and I can start
To-day without regret and unashamed;
I have not let rebuffs crowd from my heart
The courage I have struggled for—and claimed.

EVERY MAN'S CHANCE

If you cannot be a dweller on the height,
You can proudly do your best with all your might;
If you can't have wealth or fame,
You are always free to claim
The chance that each man has for doing right.

A SAILOR FOREVER

THE sailor is a sailor, wherever he may be;
He never can abandon the jargon of the sea;
His hands are always tarry—"Heave ho, my hearties, Ho!"
He takes the salt spray with him wherever he may go;
His "ship" may be a shanty,
But there he sings his chanty,
A sailor man forever, whatever winds may blow.

The merchant may endeavor, when he has turned from trade,
To cease sometimes from speaking of profits he has made;
His notions may be lofty, he may go in for art,
And heed no more the language heard in the busy mart;
He may become disdainful
Of occupations gainful,
But the sailor is a sailor forever, bless his heart.

When doctors cease to practice and lawyers quit the bar
They may develop likings for journeying afar;
Each in his new surroundings may wish to put a ban

Upon the shopworn phrases peculiar to his clan;
So with the smith or tailor,
The hangman or the jailer,
But, once a sailor, always a salty sailor man.

He may be stranded many a dusty mile from shore,
And have no cause for clinging to yardarms any more,
But his word for stopping flivvers in a hurry is "avast,"
His blanket is a mainsail, his clothes-pole is a mast;
The tar forever lingers
Upon his tongue and fingers,
For the sailor man is proudly a sailor to the last.

ALMOST PERFECT

THIS world's all right, at least, so near it
That gladness would be everywhere
If every one possessed the spirit
To be unselfish and "play fair."

TAKING IT HARD

JOE SANFORD'S mother's gone; she died
About a year ago;
She never found much cause for pride
In what was done by Joe.
He used to hit a lively pace,
Forgetting that she'd care;
A fine stone marks her resting place,
And Joe has put it there.

His boyish follies often drove
Contentment from her breast,
But long and patiently she strove,
Still hoping for the best.
He brought her grief in many shapes,
And hardships and dismay;
She got him out of forty scrapes,
For that's a mother's way.

He left her when he should have brought
The comfort she had earned;
In loneliness she sat and thought,
But Joe was unconcerned.
He journeyed far and found a mate,
As men so often will;
His mother earned the food she ate
And was neglected still.

Poor Joe goes often to her grave,
Though she's been dead a year,
And there are relics he will save;
Each thing she touched is dear!
She may be soothed because he wakes
With tears that burn and blur,
And then again perhaps it makes
No difference to her.

WAITING GENIUS

It does not matter what your wish may be,
The world cares little for mere good intentions;
The unaccomplished thing is hard to see;
Men measure still by visible dimensions.

You need not hope for honor while you dream
Concerning future pleasing circumstances;
The world is not inclined to waste esteem
On those who sit and wait for lucky chances.

AN ART THAT IS NOT LOST

Love, this is no romantic age,
And I am not a cavalier;
I may not valiantly engage
In bloody bouts for you, my dear;
No plume is in my cap; I wear
No flowing cape nor silken hose,
But I have hopes that are as fair
As ever were young Romeo's.

Love, I am not a Lancelot
Armed with a gleaming spear and shield;
I may not seek the ways he sought,
Nor make appeals as he appealed,
But if I wear no shirt of mail,
Nor come with dripping lance to you,
My ardor will not cool or fail,
The promises I make are true.

Love, I am not as picturesque
As was the daring Robin Hood;
I earn my living at a desk,
And am expected to be good;
I am no young and handsome shiek,
No swarthy darling of romance,
But I'm enraptured when you speak,
And gladdened by your tender glance.

Love, I am no young Lochinvar
  Who comes upon a prancing steed;
I merely buzz up in my car,
  A common thing enough, indeed;
But love is still as brave, my dear,
  As when proud knights in armor fought;
You kiss as well as Guinevere
  Could ever have kissed Lancelot.

TREASURED GRIEVANCES

We go our ways, forgetting
  The favors we receive,
But we remember long
The real or fancied wrong
  That one day made us grieve.

Unpleasant recollections
  Of hurts long-healed intrude;
We cling to spite, and let
Ourselves too soon forget
  The debts of gratitude.

He wouldn't take a hatchet and go hacking at
the doors,
He wouldn't think of chopping precious pieces
from the floors;
He wouldn't break the windows or attempt to
wreck the stairs,
For the house is his—he owns it, and must pay
for all repairs;
So he guards it from destruction, keeps the
walls within it strong,
And by taking due precautions hopes to make it
serve him long.

But he owns another structure that he often
fails to guard;
It is showing signs of treatment that has fre-
quently been hard;
He has cluttered it with rubbish and subjected
it to strains,
Thinking little of the value of the fittings it
contains;
He is letting its foundations constantly be
undermined,
And thinks little of the careful way in which it
was designed.

By indulgences he harms it every day beyond
repair;

When he finds it weak and shaky he will learn
perhaps to care;
Now and then he gets a warning from a pain
or from an ache,
But he blunders on, ignoring the precautions he
should take.
He protects the house he lives in, taking care to
keep it whole,
And is breaking down the dwelling that God
gave him for his soul.

ELOQUENCE

The lighter love that men reveal
Is told in phrases formed to please;
Their looks are eloquent who feel
The deeper, truer ecstasies.

The tenderness by which the strong
Make smooth the ways the weak pursue,
Or fills the lover's heart with song,
Is told in simple words and few.

ROBERT chirped to Susie: "I'm coming over there;
You look so blithe and pretty I cannot keep away."
She fluttered and seemed frightened, and answered: "Don't you dare!
I mustn't stay to listen to what you have to say."

"Please, Susie," pleaded Robert, "I don't mean any harm;
Just let me sit and watch you—that surely isn't wrong;
You make the morning pleasant; you give it a new charm;
Because you are so lovely my heart is full of song."

She ruffled up her feathers, assuming deep offense,
And flew across the meadow, with April ecstasies;
Poor Robert sought seclusion (mistaking her pretense)
Among the slender saplings, the children of the trees.

She chirped and watched and waited where
fragrant blossoms hung;
"What's keeping him, I wonder?" impa-
tiently she said.
Along came fearless Dickie, impulsive, bold
and young.
Refusing to be daunted, pursuing when she
fled.

All through the pleasant orchard they flew
from bough to bough,
And when their nest was finished and
Dickie's song was gay,
Poor, gentle-hearted Robert still wondered
sadly how
His rough and ready rival had charmed her
fears away.

A COMMON PRIVILEGE

I MAY not learn to play a part
Such as the greatly gifted can,
But I can always have the heart
To bear my burdens like a man.

I WILL give you a plan—it is one of my own—
For making life more delightful;
When another is praised for the skill he has shown
I don't become jealous or spiteful;
I try to proceed as I know that I should
In making each moment a glad one,
And I always believe in the signs that are good,
But I never believe in a bad one.

I am glad when the weather is fair; when it's wet
I prefer the rainy condition;
In each disagreement I hasten to get
A glimpse from the other's position.
I can't sing at all, but my song, if I could
Should not be a solemn or sad one,
And I always believe in the signs that are good
But I never believe in a bad one.

So I'll give you a plan—it is one I have tried—
For making the world more cheerful;
Remember, the gossip has probably lied
When he stopped you to give you an earful;
If you haven't won out as you think that you should
Still act as you would if you had won,

And always believe in the signs that are good,
  But never believe in a bad one.

A BLISSFUL POTENTATE

Men hurry past him in the street
  And pay him no respect at all;
Where those whose pride is great compete
  He has a place obscure and small;
He serves as wisely as he may
  Where magnates battle for success,
And at the end of every day
  He hastens home to happiness.

Where traffic roars and walls are high
  He earns the pittance he receives,
And few men would be gladdened by
  The little triumphs he achieves.
Denied the talents of the great,
  He hurries home, when night arrives,
To be a blissful potentate
  Among the ones for whom he strives.

Men wonder why his look is glad,
  Since he is poor and underpaid;
Obscure, hard-pressed and cheaply clad,
  He goes to duty, undismayed;
With common gifts, he envies none
  The prizes of supreme success,
For when the day's hard work is done
  He hurries home to happiness.

DELIGHTFUL VISITORS

My wife's cousin Mary Jane and her husband, who is stout,
Came to spend a week with us, and we planned to take them out;
Had the car all overhauled, and prepared in other ways
To put every care aside and have seven lovely days.

"They will both be more than glad," said the wife, "to see the sights,
And their wonder will, of course, add a lot to our delights."
Not a thing was overlooked; parties, theatres and "eats,"
And much motoring we booked for a constant round of treats.

John and Mary Jane arrived, and we met them at the train.
"Well, you don't look anything like I thought," said Mary Jane;
"I supposed—I don't know why—you were younger than you are;
How'd you ever come to buy this contraption —I mean car?"

"This town ain't so much," said John; "seems
to me it's kinda slow"—
We were halted where the crowd waited for
the word to "Go."
All our friends who came to play bridge with
Mary Jane and John
Got a panning after they had put on their
things and gone.

They had plays at home to beat anything that
we could show;
They lived in a better street than our street—
they told us so;
Nothing that we did was quite up to John and
Mary Jane;
When they started home I prayed that they
wouldn't miss their train.

GOOD LUCK

Ever since the first man muttered,
Calling luck a fickle jade,
Ever since the first boy stuttered
Fond words to an eager maid,
Ever since the sky first blended
With the treetops on a hill
Men have thought good luck was ended,
But the prudent find it still.

TO-DAY

It matters not how small my skill,
  How poor the wage that I receive,
If I can be determined still,
  Despite obstruction, to achieve;
I'll have no cause to let dismay
  Assail me with its poison sting,
If I can say: "I've learn to-day
    Some useful thing."

My recompense may not be great,
  As selfish people count their gains;
If it's my fate to work and wait
  I can, at least, be taking pains,
And have the right, at night, to lay
  My tools down with a hopeful smile—
If I can say: "My work to-day
    Has been worth while."

Successful men may pass me by,
  And grant me no regard at all;
However zealously I try,
  My progress may be slow and small,
But if I work for little pay,
  I still may keep my soul serene—
If I can say: "My hopes to-day
    Have all been clean."

My talent may not take me far,
I am no favored child of Chance,
Nor am I chosen as a star
To claim the world's approving glance,
But if I was not born to sway
I still may be a prince's peer—
If I can say: "I've helped to-day
To spread good cheer."

CLOTHES AND THE MAN

She loved him for his manly grace,
She loved him for his modest air;
She loved him for his handsome face,
She loved him for his wavy hair.

She loved him for his gracious way,
She loved him for his boasted brawn;
She loved him dearly till, one day,
She saw him with his gym suit on.

IN GOOD TIME

The cheering words we speak are seeds
That often lie long winters through
Before they blossom into deeds
And cause hopes blithely to come true.

THEIR ABSENT BOY

Oft he had read about the rise
  Of great men who had started poor;
A longing look came in his eyes,
  He felt the distant city's lure,
And dreamed of triumphs to be won
  Where men from all the climates met;
Such hopes as urged Napoleon
  Pursued him where his tasks were set.

He left the farm, one April day,
  To try his luck in wider spheres;
His father's hair was thin and gray,
  He showed the marks of toil and years;
His mother in the doorway stood,
  And watched him as he passed from sight;
Her last words were: "Be good—be good!
  And, please, Ed, don't forget to write."

The weeks were counted for a while;
  The Summer passed, and Autumn sped;
The old man answered with a smile
  When people asked concerning Ed.
The farm work still was done, somehow,
  The blossoms came with every May;
"I wonder where our boy is now?"
  Ed's mother often used to say.

One day a large, expensive car
  Came roaring down the road from town;
A man who smoked a fat cigar
  Lolled back in cushions soft as down;
He smelled the clover, lately cut,
  And saw the old man, bent and wan;
The motorist looked wealthy—but
  He wasn't Ed, and drove right on.

STAGNATION

Back from the sweet, clear stream
  There is a stagnant pool
Where slimy things are bred;
The water's foul and dead
  That once was fresh and cool.

Back from the stream of life,
  Majestic and sublime,
Men step sometimes, to wail
And wonder why they fail,
  Their feet immersed in slime.

THE DAILY ROUND

"LIFE," said Mudge, "is a dreary round—
  Down in the morning, and back at night;
Over and over the same old ground,
  Never a sign of a change in sight!
Up for breakfast, and then away
  To toil at the same old tasks once more;
Back at the end of the long, dull day,
  As you've done it a thousand times before."

Poor old, pitiful, jaded Mudge!
  Eyes he has, but he fails to see;
Long ago he became a drudge,
  And a plodding drudge he will always be.
To him the clouds are no more than clouds,
  Though often they look like stately ships;
He gives no heed to the passing crowds,
  Nor sends his fancies on thrilling trips.

"Down in the morning, and back at night?"
  Aye, but always a changing scene!
A friendly nod, or a laugh that's light;
  Shades of purple and pink and green;
Shouting children where, yesterday,
  All was dreary and still and bare;
Hopeful thousands upon the way—
  The call to do and the will to dare.

Something gained when the day is done;
The cheer in a word of praise well-earned;
A plan made clear, an ascent begun,
New skill achieved or a lesson learned!
Eject the grumbler, and close the door;
Forget the trivial snub or slight,
And life and work will be meaning more
Than "down in the morning, and back at night."

WHEN YOUR BEST IS DONE

When you've done the thing which through many days
You have tried to do, and no word of praise
Brings the flush of pride to your pallid cheeks—
When your task is finished, and no one speaks
The cheering word you have hoped to hear,
And nobody seems to know or care—
When you've done your best, and your rivals sneer,
And the hopes are shattered that were so fair,
When the dreams are ended that were so sweet,
And the victory that had seemed so near
Has been turned, somehow, into sore defeat—
When you've done your best, after planning long,

When you've had your chance, and have failed
to score,
When doubts assail you where all seems
wrong,
And you wonder why you had hoped before,
Then—then, when your best has been done,
and all
The airy castles around you fall,
Be a victor yet! With a conqueror's will
Fling your challenge out—and do better still!

DECEMBER 31

FAREWELL, Old Year; be on your way
To merge within the misty past;
You brought me many a happy day,
Much I'll remember till the last;
I've not become renowned or rich,
But I have made some gains to which
I shall endeavor to hold fast.

Some friends I've won, and they have brought
Me many moments of good cheer;
I've learned to cease to waste a thought
On things that once aroused my fear;
Much I have missed that I would claim,
But for some reasons I could name
This year has been my gladdest year.

Along the way that lies behind
  Are grudges that I've cast aside,
And I have learned to be resigned
  To things that once disturbed my pride;
Not all the days were calm or fair,
But there were many places where
  My hopes came true, because I tried.

I've learned a little now and then
  To treasure in my humble store,
And found when cheering other men
  My own cheer growing more and more;
I like to think that there are some
Bright spots along the way I've come,
  Where only sadness was before.